THE LITANY *of* WASHINGTON STREET

Vachel Lindsay

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THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

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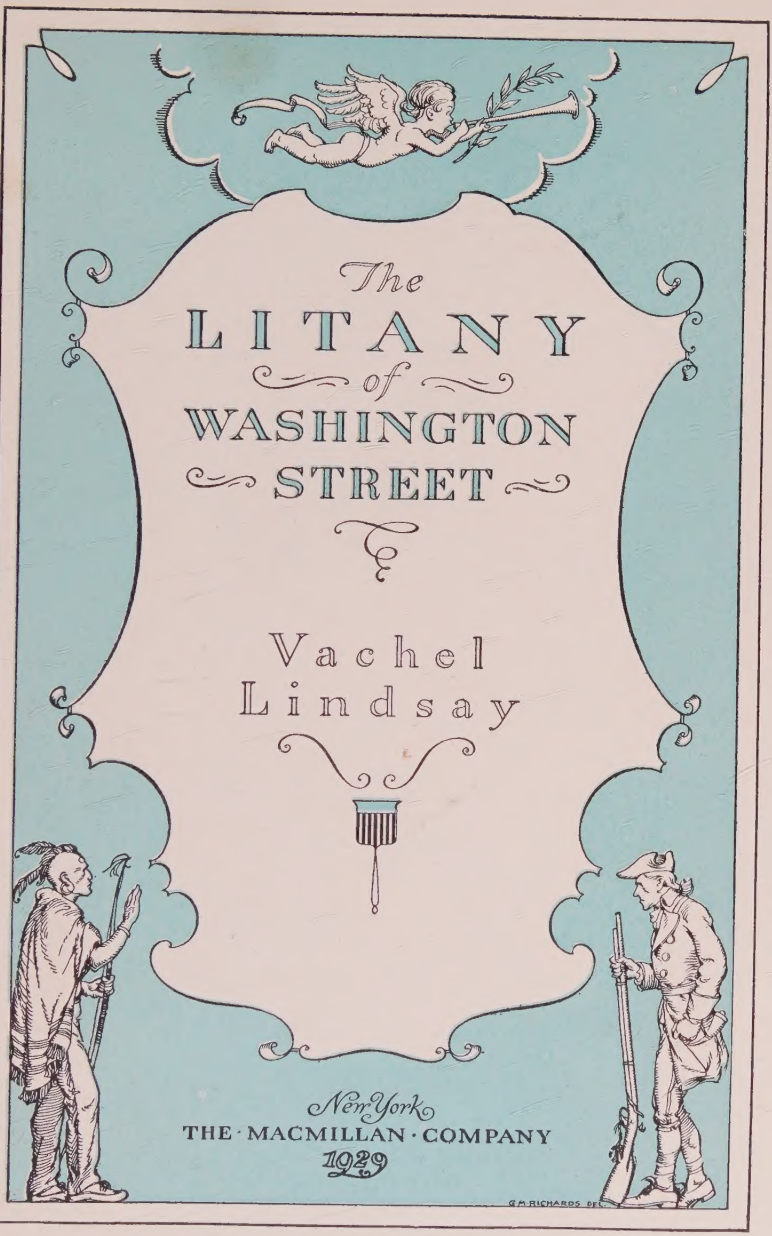

The LITANY of WASHINGTON STREET

Vachel Lindsay

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1929

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THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

PROLOGUE

This is a Gilbert Stuart kind of a book. It is a kind of a Washington's birthday, Lincoln's birthday, Whitman's birthday and Jefferson's birthday book. Please do not be too censorious of non-historical sentences. Draw your pencil through them and go on. I have read accredited historians and the latest historians in these periods. And, being born in the Lincoln country and having acted as guide there to innumerable visitors from all over the world, I know at least the outline of the Lincoln legend.

I am not trying to please the kind of historians that fight over a comma or a phrase. I hope that they will find this as presentable as most orations by most educated United States Senators. Please remember, dear historians, that this is a

work of the imagination, somewhat in the spirit of state house and court house and dollar bill mural paintings and engravings. It is somewhat in the spirit of the designs of special postage stamps. It is somewhat in the spirit of the best Fourth of July decorations and speeches, and the way patriotic people remember their heroes in fancy and in oratory.

These orations and litanies are held together by quotations from Walt Whitman. I have an essay here on "The Loneliness of Walt Whitman, Statesman-Poet." That essay endeavors to destroy the Whitman created by the Whitman cult. The quotations from Whitman scattered through the work lead the mind to his statesmanship, and I hope away from a false direction in which the Whitman cult has started the United States mind in regard to this man. It is now the fashion among our ultra to say "Whistler, Whitman and Poe." I hope the time will come when they will say "Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Whitman." Whitman was a free-soiler, an active politician throughout his youth, edited political party papers, took our political axioms seriously, and slowly developed them into his poetry. When he says the Constitution, he means the Constitution. When he says the Flag, it is the Star Spangled Banner he is talking about (however our expatriates may squirm). When he talks about the President with a capital letter, he means the President of the United States of America. He believes in the man and the office. Aside from his general orthodox United Statesism, he is a Jeffersonian. Without Jefferson we cannot get Whitman. Therefore, I list him among our statesmen, rather than among our literati.

"The way patriotic people remember their heroes in fancy and oratory."

THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

I issued in 1920 "The Golden Whales of California and other Rhymes in the American Language." Now I think the more precise phrase is: "The United States Language." It is a tongue confined to the forty-eight states of the Union, and it is not spoken by Canadians or Mexicans. Canadians speak British. Mexicans speak Mexican. People who care for our queer speech enough to use it well, become United States citizens. In using this new phrase "The United States Language," I challenge directly to debate my friend the enemy, H. L. Mencken, with whom I agree in nothing except the necessity of free speech, a free press, and personal courage at all times.

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN, THE ORTHODOX GEORGE WASHINGTONIAN

Aye, this is the ground;
My blind eyes, even as I speak, behold it re-peopled from graves;
The years recede, pavements and stately houses disappear;
Rude forts appear again, the old hoop'd guns are mounted;
I see the lines of rais'd earth stretching from river to bay;
I mark the vista of waters, I mark the uplands and slopes:
Here we lay encamp'd—it was this time in summer also.

As I talk, I remember all—I remember the Declaration;
It was read here—the whole army paraded—it was read to us here;
By his staff surrounded, the General stood in the middle—he held up his unsheath'd sword,
It glitter'd in the sun in full sight of the army.

'Twas a bold act then;
The English war-ships had just arrived—the king had sent them from over the sea;
We could watch down the lower bay where they lay at anchor,
And the transports, swarming with soldiers.

A few days more, and they landed—and then the battle.

Twenty thousand were brought against us,
A veteran force, furnish'd with good artillery.

I tell not now the whole of the battle;
But one brigade, early in the forenoon, order'd forward to engage the red-coats;
Of that brigade I tell, and how steadily it march'd,
And how long and how well it stood, confronting death.

Who do you think that was, marching steadily, sternly confronting death?

It was the brigade of the youngest men, two thousand strong,

Rais'd in Virginia and Maryland, and many of them known personally to the General.

LET US SOLEMNLY AND GAILY OBSERVE:

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 22
WITH STREET PARADES

JEFFERSON'S BIRTHDAY, APRIL 2
WITH GREAT FREE SPEECH FORUMS

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 12
WITH GENUINE HONORS TO THOSE HE EMANCIPATED

WHITMAN'S BIRTHDAY, MAY 31
WITH NEW, GREAT, MAYPOLE DANCES

He says indifferently and alike, *How are you, friend?* to the President at his levee,
And he says, *Good-day, my brother!* to Cudge that hoes in the sugar-field,
And both understand him, and know that his speech is right.
He walks with perfect ease in the Capitol,
He walks among the Congress, and one Representative says to another, *Here is our equal, appearing and new.*

Then the mechanics take him for a mechanic,
And the soldiers suppose him to be a soldier, and the sailors that he has follow'd the sea,
And the authors take him for an author, and the artists for an artist,
And the laborers perceive he could labor with them and love them;
No matter what the work is, that he is the one to follow it, or has follow'd it,
No matter what the nation, that he might find his brothers and sisters there.

WASHINGTON STREET IS FOREVER AGAINST MAIN STREET

(Daniel Webster gives us the supposed speech of John Adams. This is a supposed speech by a United States Troubadour, at the intersection of Washington and Main Streets, Spokane.)

I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement, spiritual, bold;
I announce an end that shall lightly and joyfully meet its translation;
I announce myriads of youths, beautiful, gigantic, sweet-blooded;
I announce a race of splendid and savage old men.

We are overwhelmed with advertising campaigns which attempt to sweep the country and obliterate all things that preceded them. A presidential campaign at its height can be a noble advertising campaign on both sides, and most absorbing; yet even such a storm cannot abolish history and some things in the litany of every day.

The smallest town on the map may have fourteen well-named streets. Running one way, they are likely to be First, Second, Third, and Fourth streets; then Main Street, then Fifth and Sixth streets. These might be said to be mere numbers and conveniences, not streets in the way I want to talk about them.

The other seven notable streets of any village are likely to be named for the first seven Presidents of the United States: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe,

Jackson, Van Buren. Few towns get so far as Harrison, no matter what their size. They then name local settlers. We have here either whimsicality or the infallibility of tradition, according to your philosophy. Certainly a town without Washington, Adams, and Jefferson streets is a freak in geography. I like to investigate those historical characters who have streets named after them. Necessarily we must begin with Washington Street.

The most useful citizen among all the prose writers of our republic for many a day is Sinclair Lewis. I could name to you three hundred literary fads that have come and gone since he wrote *Main Street* and *Babbitt*. The elegant oracles of Manhattan who first thrust those books upon us have now discovered far more elegant books, and are leaving that crude creature, Sinclair Lewis, to the western proletariat, but the westerners have written into their dictionary forever two words as he has defined them, "Main Street" and "Babbitt." I refer you to his definitions.

Main Street has nothing to do with resounding history. When a village not even incorporated had only one artery, for a generation that was called "Main Street." When the village grew up around this one exaggerated muddy road, "Main Street" and "Babbitt" became most assertive; and Sinclair Lewis has served us well in delineating their asinine ideas. The rival of Main Street in geography is Washington Street; and so we have reached our theme. It crosses Main Street at a right angle.

Perhaps the realist may discover that in many a town Washington Street has grown dim and dingy and leads out to the silliest road in the country; but when it was named,

it was with a magnificent intention, as the Via Appia was named for Appius Claudius. Let us construct an imaginary Washington Street in a composite town made of all the towns that have a Washington, an Adams, a Jefferson street. Let us build it in this hour out of those imperishable mists which are our only realities, in the light of the very latest books on Washington, and the earliest dreams of our forefathers when they named Washington Street in love and reverence.

This Washington Street, drawn in imagination from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is a great wooded and residential highway, the song and poetry street of every United States town. We have met the darlings of our hearts on Washington Street. When it enters a grove, or passes through national park or national forest, as we go on with those who are dearest to us for companions, we are in our own land indeed, a million miles from Babbitt or Main Street or from any disturbers of the Old Virginia grand style.

The street may pass through old battlefields or new and treacherous regions which promise slaughter or storm; but it is as far as the human soul may get from the trivial, the puffy, the snappy, the cheap; as far as possible from the world of the smart aleck and the go-getter, the cynic, the liar, and the wise guy.

In an article in *The Saturday Evening Post* for November 13, 1926, I said, "There were three great Virginia poets in the very beginning—George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson." All three have made Washington Street. Their names and thoughts have been so blended that on Fourth of July or Washington's Birthday, quotations

from any one of them sound like quotations from the other two so far as the wandering romancer on Washington Street is concerned, whether he is a pop corn vender or a member of President Coolidge's cabinet.

I am very grateful for the relentless realists who have been at work of late proving to us beyond a shadow of doubt that these three men, Washington, Henry, and Jefferson, differed from one another so much that it was a wonder there was any possible coöperation at any time. Also I hear the derisive laughter of the judges of poetry poultry, when I say that Washington was a poet.

It can be proved that he was not, by his endless diaries and account books, by his interminable surveys, as exhilarating as a complete railway guide, by the fact that most of the books he read without strain had to do with the breeding of horses and livestock, and with experiments with grain. He could not spell. Alexander Hamilton taught him his grammar. He received some of his formal education in the United States language from subordinate officers who wrote his dispatches in the Revolution.

I welcome all evidence to prove that Washington was not a reader of our best magazines, nor yet one of the twelve apostles. I welcome all evidence that he was neither Daniel Webster, Noah Webster, nor the obscure author of that famous poem, "The Star Spangled Banner," Francis Scott Key. But let me add at once that "The Star Spangled Banner" would not be waving on Washington Street nor anywhere else, if it had not been for this mysterious and inaccessible mountain of a man, George Washington.

Only a poet working long before, writing in blood and

not in ink, could have made such a poem as "The Star Spangled Banner" possible. It was written years after Washington's death. It was dreamed by Washington the silent, on horseback, about 1776.

Washington Street is in the grand style from end to end. The grand style has destroyed whole generations of European artists. So I have only sympathy for those who mistrust the grand style. Yet on mature reflection, I think they had better leave the United States; they are going to suffer here. There are so many things in our past and in our present that are grand that, work and expose as busily as the realists may, they will die in the end like ants that try to carry off the White House, and only get away with a little sugar and sand. To abolish the grand style in United States history and in the human imagination because it has been faked by second-raters, is like abolishing all the joy of sun, moon, and stars by a little chatter about mathematical astronomy.

It takes a kind of mathematical astronomy to prove that Columbus was right in declaring that the world was round; but mathematical astronomy does not abolish Columbus because he thought that he had reached India, not America.

When I think of the grand style of George Washington of Virginia, I think of two other types of plumed chiefs whose valor was unquestioned and whose names resound. The first plumed chief is that composite picture of all Gascons who will march forever on the French stage, Cyrano de Bergerac, who was true to his white plume; who was never afraid of the grand manner; who walked alone with the utmost defiance in the darkest midnight street; and who

died with his white plume high and untouched. In all these things he was the implied pupil of such Gascons as D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers, whose effervescence was a tidal wave of fury and joy; whose splendor was the splendor of long, graceful, incredible speed in the gesture, the sword thrust, and the bow to the audience when the battle was over. Not one of these Gascons was afraid to wear dazzling ribbons or to make a deep double bow with a tremendous hat that swept the ground. Alien as this type may be from the fat, newly rich steerage passengers who try to control our destinies from their rabbit warrens, incredible as its gallantry and high-heartedness may be, George Washington's greater Virginia manner, action, and record is to them still more incredible, for he accomplished his work with an immobile dignity, a quiescence beyond that of the Roman stoic, and a long-legged, watchtower quality which makes the jumping Gascon look like a baby whirlwind. People rage at the Gilbert Stuart portraits and the supercilious postage-stamp profile of George Washington, and the awful lies told to illustrate his unquestionable impregnability; but when all the raging is done, Washington is still our first poet, and Washington Street our Appian Way, and the ants have not run away with the White House.

The next type of chieftain to whom I would compare General George Washington of Virginia is the opposite of the Gascon in the whole history of mankind, the plumed Indian leader of the western borders of Virginia with whom Washington carried on incredible wars through his entire military apprenticeship. More graceful and long-legged than a Gascon, Washington was sterner and more straight-

backed than Powhatan or his descendants who raised hell in the western woods. A man is made by his enemies. He thinks like his enemy, to conquer him. The leading American families had been on American soil almost a century by the time the Revolution was on; and most of that time they had been trying to think like Indians to get the best of the Indians.

In conference and in war, the Indian chiefs maintained a dignity which taught an unforgettable lesson to the best blood of Europe. This blood was now fighting Indian wars in the western woods of Virginia. There was no middle ground with the red man. It was the scalp or the peace pipe with him. In war or in peace he is to the last hour of his history as a statesman, all the way to Chief Joseph of Idaho, a better man at pure dignity than George Washington himself. Man to man, the red Indian is a better warrior and a better statesman than the European. There is overwhelming evidence that young George Washington, a fox-hunting tidewater lad of sixteen, formed his style on the transplanted British squire Lord Fairfax, who owned more land than is in the whole state of New Jersey, and who was the squire complete. But I cheerfully reject this evidence and say that George Washington, like all other United States citizens, was more influenced by red Indians than by anything brought over from Europe, be it a squire or a book.

If his grand manner is incredible to you, my friends, do not think of him as a super-Virginian, think of him rather as a super-Indian chief in silk stockings and velvet pants. Washington actually wore plumes in his hat at his formal receptions after he was elected President. Think of him as

an Indian. Then his magnificence and immobility will not be so unaccountable to you.

This thesis of the Indian in our stock might lead us far afield. Go into what details you may, the British were astonished at the American attitude in 1776 on every question. They remain so today. The British talent for compromise between the bitterest radical and the most rock-

ribbed conservative has completely gone from us. It is the scalping knife or the peace pipe with us, and there is no intermediate story.

Dear friend, have you ever considered the grand manner of a red Indian before battle—be it Tippecanoe or the Custer Massacre? Indians have often held long and solemn ghost dances for weeks and months before entering on the war-path. Those displays of splendor were far more important

to them than any secrecy. Just as an Indian chief would put on his war paint and walk into a council that was debating peace or war, knowing he was the best fighter there, so this tall George Washington stalked into the Continental Congress in uniform, the only man in uniform there, and indeed as silent as an Indian. John Adams nominated him for commander-in-chief, thoroughly and rightly impressed by the plumes and the silence.

There is a lot about Chief Joseph of Idaho that makes one think of George Washington. The right was all on Chief Joseph's side, as even *Harper's Monthly Magazine* of that time testifies; but the main characteristic of Chief Joseph was that he was the entire army and navy of the Nez Percé Indians.

I have just been reading the very profitable work of a new historian who says that George Washington was a poor general, but that he held the Continental cause together by his "force of character." In this, earlier "historians" concur. Like Chief Joseph, he was his entire tribe and people; if this was not generalship, make the most of it. Certainly there were many times when the Revolution consisted of George Washington on horseback riding toward the enemy slowly and magnificently, and looking impregnable; shot at a thousand times and always missed; while the patriots were somewhere back there in the nearby woods, invisible but bushwhacking according to the Indian code.

I have ventured in this connection to revise the old British epithet about George Washington: they called him "The Old Fox." He was a fox, in that he was something that came out of the woods, out of the very deep woods; but he was in

plain sight often enough too, as foxes seldom are. When the British called him "The Old Fox," they meant that his men were recruited from backwoods sharpshooters, trained only in Indian forest warfare; and with every one of them, it was the scalping knife or the peace pipe, as an individual matter; and every separate tree was a new entrenchment. Any hypothesis can be overproved; but remember Franklin's coonskin cap which he wore at the court of France; remember John Marshall, who in his old age became a shelf full of long, long, weary law books; in his youth he was a free soul, and marched with a company of Revolutionary patriots dressed in Indian jackets, leggings, and moccasins; and on the breast of every jacket was embroidered a rattler with the motto, "Don't tread on me."

One might shoot an Indian without warning; one would not venture to tread on him while he was still alive. White men went for their slaves all the way to Africa. Washington advocated in the beginning the Indian costume for his men; and the Boston Tea Party, which has lately become so elegant that it almost floats away on pink clouds, was actually at unity with all this argumentation. Not only were the men dressed as Mohawk Indians, but the thought of the Indians as friends or enemies was still in the back of every mind.

Even in 1790, almost all settled, middle-aged citizens and householders lived on tidewater or within fifty miles of it; but mark you, I say "settled citizens." Patrick Henry had his youthful days of wandering in the west with squirrel rifle and coonskin cap. Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas Jefferson, was a surveyor who pushed away to the west,

tracing the Randolph lands or surveying the southern border of Virginia—a kind of Daniel Boone forming forever Jefferson's fundamental concept of the final unit of democracy. Peter Jefferson was as near to a red Indian as possible, as deep in the woods and as independent.

With all their talk of "Coke upon Littleton" and of Blackstone, and their clatter of the legality or the illegality of the Revolution that our fathers worked out slowly in the courts before men finally went to war, the fundamental thing was that a colonist was not an Anglo-Saxon; this soil had given him its special vitamins, the blood of its wild animals; he was acquiring a tomahawk skull and cheekbones, a face that distinguished him forever from the Englishman, and a tomahawk way of thinking that distinguished him forever from Europe and made him no longer a Colonist.

Of all this, George Washington was the great chief, disguised at Mount Vernon in silk stockings and velvet breeches, in carefully powdered hair and a three-cornered hat, in Virginia greatcoat, and Virginia high boots, but not a colonist, rather a native in his own right.

THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

(This litany is assumed to be chanted by a United States Troubadour at the intersection of Washington and Main Streets, Spokane.)

—In arriere, the peace-talk with the Iroquois, the aborigines—the calumet, the pipe of good-will, arbitration, and indorsement,
The sachem blowing the smoke first toward the sun and then toward the earth,
The drama of the scalp-dance enacted with painted faces and guttural exclamations,
The setting out of the war-party—the long and stealthy march,
The single-file—the swinging hatchets—the surprise and slaughter of enemies;
—All the acts, scenes, ways, persons, attitudes of These States—reminiscences, all institutions,
All These States, compact—Every square mile of These States, without excepting a particle—you also—me also,

. . . . . .

Who are you, indeed, who would talk or sing to America?
Have you studied out the land, its idioms and men?
Have you learn'd the physiology, phrenology, politics, geography,

pride, freedom, friendship, of the land? its substratums and objects?

Have you consider'd the organic compact of the first day of the first year of Independence, sign'd by the Commissioners, ratified by The States, and read by Washington at the head of the army?

Have you possess'd yourself of the Federal Constitution?

Do you see who have left all feudal processes and poems behind them, and assumed the poems and processes of Democracy?

Friends: Let us look at him still on horseback, riding down Washington Street. He is our aborigine. Let us give him an Indian name.

To call a man a lion is always an Asiatic compliment. To call him an eagle is a European compliment. These are accepted metaphors of oratory; but the Indians did not hesitate to venture far afield in their complimentary names. They would call a man Chief Angry Bear, Chief Big Elk, Chief White Buffalo; or a woman, Lady White Bird; and, after this manner of speaking, were evolved the metaphors of the Bull Moose campaign, and the Indian names bestowed on Queen Marie's party lately in Spokane.

Turn to Dean Swift who, long before our Revolution, in *Gulliver's Travels,* was hunting through all the races of mankind for a man like George Washington and finding him not. He was hunting for a different sort of person from Parson Weems' "Lying Idiot," not for a vague general demagogue made of clouds and cotton batting, but for a person of certain simple attributes worked out to their highest logic, till they became a delight as well as a definite personality. If we read Gulliver, we find that he wanders through the kingdoms of the pigmies and the giants; but it is in a king-

dom ruled by magnificent Houyhnhnms that he seems to have pleased himself most. His master is not a horse. It is as though a sign of the zodiac had turned into Pegasus himself.

This tremendous, high-stepping master, this steed greater than any centaur, this picture made of stars, is a dim step toward what I would like to say when I name George Washington "The Great Red Indian Chief, White Horse." Edgar Poe's *Metzengerstein* is a mystic story of a sort of steed that was a demigod, capable of gigantic justice; it might lead the mind to what I mean by this Indian name. When Washington was a young man fighting and surveying on the western frontiers, the Indians were always naming him fancy names after some fashion; and until we name him, we cannot know him.

The best steed is more imperturbable than a man, more faithful than a man, more direct than a man, with a more fixed countenance, with a body so powerful that it becomes in itself a symbol of inexhaustibility; is graceful beyond any human grace, prefers dancing to walking, arches its neck without loss of dignity or imperturbability, goes straight to its goal, can find its way home without lantern or guide when the rider is asleep on the longest, blackest night through the muddiest road, holds no grudges, remembers no enemies, and can overtake and pass any man afoot in the world.

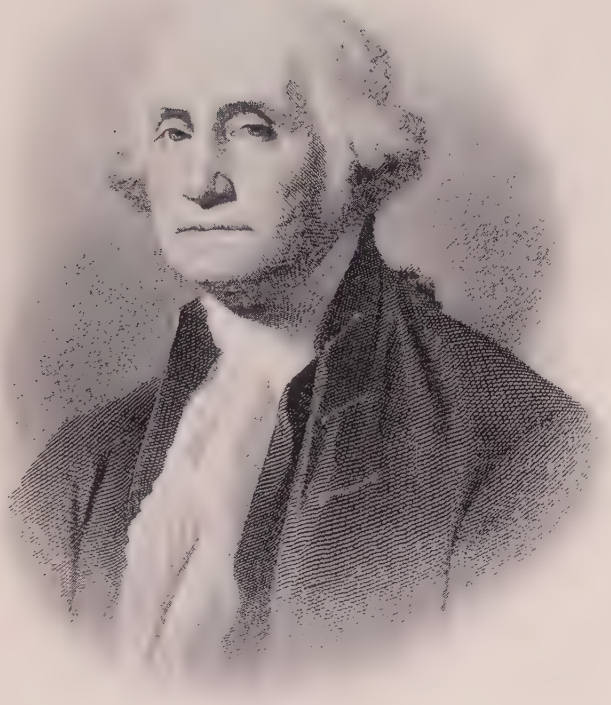
So when the smart boys all get themselves together and prove Washington slow thinking; fond of farming; a British foxhunting squire; by accident, our commander-in-chief; surveyor, accountant, and mathematician; a pacer off of paces; one with a passion for acres and rivers; one to whom a book

was a bore, an argument an irrelevancy, why are they then so angry when, their life work done, General George Washington of Virginia still rides on horseback down Washington Street?

I happen to have been a sort of art student for years and years, and to have lectured on Gilbert Stuart portraits of unknowns. Gilbert Stuart painted the notables of his time in a way that was genius, but which fits only Washington. The others look rather curious painted in this manner. Any Gilbert Stuart portrait is on canvas, in oil; but looks as though it were painted on glass, in water color; the whites are transparent or translucent; the powdered wigs seem like spun glass. The dignity is red Indian; all the rest is a curiosity of the art gallery. But when he painted Washington, he was dealing with a mystery; and this mysterious manner for once found its infallible subject and mountain-dignity.

Most of the efforts of the new Washington scholarship seem to be to destroy the meaning of the Gilbert Stuart portrait; but if you pile up evidence roof-high, and prove beyond a doubt that the subject of this portrait was a human being, it still remains an inevitable portrait of our great red Indian chief, White Horse. Thus it comes about that Gilbert Stuart is the only human being who ever painted a portrait of a red Indian chief. All other attempts are art calendars and railroad advertisements.

I have named Washington, Jefferson, and Patrick Henry as three poets of our beginning. But I would speak of another triumvirate now—Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton, the New Yorker.



G. Washington

George Washington is a mountain between the Jeffersonians and the Hamiltonians who still carry on merry war throughout the length and breadth of this country. The only thing that separates them is that, at the height of the battle, his Gilbert Stuart portrait seems to float between them like the mist and smoke of some medicine man's camp fire. The only national-commission form of government that the United States ever had was in Washington's first administration, when Hamilton and Jefferson were both in one cabinet.

I am a Jeffersonian; and Hamilton makes me as impatient as he ever did any fair-minded Democratic Party man. But just as I open my mouth to rail, The Great Chief, White Horse, rides between me and the object of my impatient invective. It is with some pleasure that I observe that the same thing happens to the Hamiltonians. I have read page after page that tried to prove that Jefferson was a bigger man than Washington; or that, on the other hand, Hamilton was a bigger man than Washington. But Jefferson and Hamilton can never desert their chief; he always towers over them. I have recently read an able and commendable book on the part of Jefferson by a zealous British partisan who is straining, straining almost to a shriek, commanding George Washington and Alexander Hamilton to get off Washington Street and let Jefferson ride there by himself.

Now these three gentlemen, Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton, expressed for one another at certain rare propitious moments the highest "esteem." It is too deep a matter for the hasty student to discover what in their private capacities they meant by "esteem." As far as Washington

Street is concerned, they are bound together in an irrevocable fate. We cannot talk them out of existence. We would be like a geologist who tries to talk the scenery out of existence, who does not see the mountains, but the strata, while the other tourists see the splendors of a Glacier Park sunset.

Always on Washington Street I see those three superb horsemen, Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton, riding abreast. Washington in the middle on a much bigger, higher horse, never looking to the right or to the left, except when he has a direct question from Jefferson or Hamilton. Not one of them can be outmatched in superb pride, though each has a pride all his own; not one of them can be excelled in horsemanship by the others. But if Jefferson must address Hamilton, he has to look around the General, and lean forward, which is difficult to do; or lag behind the General, which his pride will not permit. Thus I deride my favorite hero. I will let Hamiltonians say that if Hamilton wishes to address Jefferson, he must peep around George Washington's horse, even to get a glimpse of the red-headed "Sage of Monticello." With Hamilton or with Jefferson, it is the tomahawk or the peace pipe. They both had Indian training. But they are so mindful of the General that they dare not stop for a personal encounter. So as they ride with the great red Indian chief, White Horse, it is the peace pipe forever on Washington Street, an enforced truce, but truce of a sort.

What is the scenery of Washington Street? First, Mount Vernon, the incarnation of George Washington. Perhaps the old Raleigh Tavern of Williamsburg, where Jefferson

danced, and played his violin by the fire. Surely there is a bank and an army post, with regulars drilling hard, or Hamilton would not have occasion to ride down Washington Street. Hamilton looks the young Napoleon suppressed. Washington watched him, watched him, watched him; and he became what was practically the supreme military commander of the United States only when Washington was ready to die.

And is Jefferson close to Washington because Washington deems it safer for the country to have him there than somewhere in the woods? I rather think, in spite of the deep deductions of new and old historians about Washington's stupidity, that there is a medicine man's reason for Jefferson and Hamilton's having to ride abreast of Washington, down Washington Street, and not down Hamilton Street or Jefferson Street.

There are endless clubs and whole shelves of books trying to give Hamilton the middle of the way. There are whole shelves of books, there is even a great political party, expressly determined to give Jefferson the middle of the way. To that paradoxical party I find myself belonging; but watch the three men riding yet, straight toward the sunset. Jefferson keeps near the southern curb, Hamilton near the northern curb; and I say that the three horses will move abreast till the day of doom, with the great plumed chief in the middle, dressed beyond the nerve of the other two in silks and fine leather, in spurs so glittering and with a hat so dazzling that even the patrician Hamilton would not have the courage to ride so bedecked through a nation where no grown man dares dress up. It has long remained a problem

and an almost ineradicable mystery how such a glittering man could be the father of so middle-class a country. But we are at last taking on his grand style. Concerning this dawning "grand manner" I wish to write many new songs.

It is always "the kings and the commons against the lords"; and it is our commonest people who keep this king on horseback and who are beginning to take on his manner. Our lords have not the courage of their apparent power; so it is not real power at all. Washington was our first and last king, though there were four near kings besides him in the presidency: Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. These all had their backwoods or their courtly magnificences. But the Constitution of the United States was cut to fit the pattern of George Washington; and it has fitted no man who has succeeded him. Whoever rides after must ride behind the cavalcade of the General and his two aides, or else go afoot.

Washington in old age was roundly denounced by all the ultra-Jeffersonians as an aristocrat, as though it were a crime. I say if he had the grand style, it was a good gift to the nation. If he had any caste ideas from the old Virginia aristocracy, it was a bad legacy, and meant that it was time for party government to begin. The first thing in his grand style, which our richest potentate dare not imitate, has nothing to do with caste—it is this red Indian self-possession and superb horsemanship. Any broncho buster can try for it. It would be mere outdoor acting if, as I say, he had not been successfully impersonating the entire army and navy through the entire Revolution and for some time after. Meanwhile, his extreme sensitiveness to criticism from

blacksmith or lord of the manor was a form of democracy. He still outbids Jefferson in the battle for the hearts of the people. Washington's was an honest, detailed, and administrative mind, that of a sort of archangel surveyor.

Our cavalcade of three goes down Washington Street till it reaches the great West, till it passes the Blackfeet Indian Reservation with the tom-toms still beating, till the foam of the Pacific is sweeping over the breasts of the horses, and even the far-western state called Washington is behind them.

I say anything not in the grand manner is utterly out of keeping with this cavalcade; and our thinkers, writers, students, politicians, will always be torturing themselves until they surrender to the grand manner, which is a part of them because they are first the children of these three men; flippancy and jazziness in radical or conservative is merely self-immolation. We will not be a really happy set of highbrows till we admit to ourselves that Washington Street is our Appian Way; and till we are willing that our humblest citizen shall have a chance to be a king and Indian chief on horseback as much like old George as strength and sense permit.

Scorners do not get George Washington; the bitter cannot understand him; and the tiny minority of scorners who try to say a new and final word for us every six weeks miss the ornateness of the man they chirp at and patronize and despise. We need not despair of our newly growing disposition for the grand style. We have it in acres of movies, where we hardly recognize the great rainbow

curve because our fathers in Europe so long ago mistrusted any great curve as the gesture of tyranny.

George Washington with his extreme sensitiveness to the criticism of the humblest citizen was more ornate than Louis XIV of France; he was a taller pillar when he was inaugurated than Louis XIV was when he was crowned. We have already sensed that tremendous dignity in our skyscrapers, all our own, unknown to any other land or age. And all of the good ones, if I may say so, are on Washington Street; all of them approximating the grand style, many achieving it as well as the redwoods of California achieved it ages ago.

George Washington's very handwriting has the long rainbow curve of the grand manner; no man north of Mason and Dixon's line ever wrote willingly with such curves, or bowed so magnificently, or danced with such pomp till this, our dawning day of new chivalry.

Very useful scribblers with spluttery, prosy stub pens tell us the whole cynical, dirty truth about this son of the Golden Age of Virginia. They put in everything with the exception of his splendor. These men with stub pens leave out the overarching rainbow curve which was his very self, his essential signature, and which sweeps from the great deep to the great deep.

"Ere I forget thee, O Virginia, may my right hand forget her cunning!"

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN, GOING WEST TOWARD THE PRAIRIES, AND, AGAIN, GOING INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Night on the prairies;
The supper is over—the fire on the ground burns low;
The wearied emigrants sleep, wrapt in their blankets;
I walk by myself—I stand and look at the stars, which I think now I never realized before.

. . . . . .

See, in arriere, the wigwam, the trail, the hunter's hut, the flat-boat, the maize-leaf, the claim, the rude fence, and the backwoods village;
See, on the one side the Western Sea, and on the other the Eastern Sea, how they advance and retreat upon my poems, as upon their own shores.
See, pastures and forests in my poems—See, animals, wild and tame—See, beyond the Kanzas, countless herds of buffalo, feeding on short curly grass;

. . . . . .

Aware of the fresh free giver, the flowing Missouri—aware of mighty Niagara;
Aware of the buffalo herds, grazing the plains—the hirsute and strong-breasted bull;
Of earth, rocks, Fifth-month flowers, experienced—stars, rain, snow, my amaze;
Having studied the mocking-bird's tones, and the mountain-hawk's,

And heard at dusk the unrival'd one, the hermit thrush from the swamp-cedars,
Solitary, singing in the West, I strike up for a New World.

. . . . . .

Below, a fertile valley spread, with barns, and the orchards of summer;
Behind, the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt in places, rising high;
Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall shapes, dingily seen;
The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far, some away up on the mountain;
The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-sized, flickering;
And over all, the sky—the sky! far, far out of reach, studded, breaking out, the eternal stars.
Hungering, hungering, hungering, for primal energies, and Nature's dauntlessness,
I refresh'd myself with it only, I could relish it only;
I waited the bursting forth of the pent fire—on the water and air I waited long;
—But now I no longer wait—I am fully satisfied—I am glutted;
I have witness'd the true lightning—I have witness'd my cities electric;
I have lived to behold man burst forth, and warlike America rise;
Hence I will seek no more the food of the northern solitary wilds,
No more on the mountains roam, or sail the stormy sea.

THE CAMPFIRE ON THE BANKS OF OLD SANGAMON

(This is a story told to our Old Settlers' Picnic, on the banks of the Sangamon River, Sangamon County, Illinois.)

A beautiful friend that I hold very dear, who knows little of the Middle West has suggested for the title of the present argument:—"That Undiscovered Country." Of course, by this title is implied the complete quotation "From whose bourne no traveler returns." That is, the land of the grave. I am willing to accept even this limitation to my title and point of view, and work out. I think you may like the process.

The Middle West is one of those regions calculated to act as a unit in presidential campaigns when real issues are afoot; it is imagined to be a unit in our attempts at national literary criticism. A novelist from Wisconsin or Ohio is called a "middle western" novelist. William Allen White,

editor of the *Emporia Gazette,* Emporia, Kansas, is called a "middle western" editor. I remember once drawing a map of the various regions of the United States in which I called the Middle West "The Bryan Farms." It is sometimes called "The Chautauqua Paradise," because of the multitudes of Chautauquas there; though they may be found all over.

First, let us approach the task of naming the states which have a chance to get into the middle western list: they are the states of what Hamlin Garland calls "The Middle Border"; that is, the region west of the Appalachians, and east of the Cordilleras, which are *not* south of Mason and Dixon's line. "The Middle Border" was, in the time of Andrew Jackson and Johnny Appleseed, the frontier. In that day, "Mason and Dixon's Line" was slowly being drawn by the reiterated phrasing of those words, in the speeches of John Randolph of Roanoke, the Virginia leader in Congress. The northern and southern halves of the Old West were being divided by the slavery issue, and were finally dramatized by Eliza's crossing of the ice in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

In those "Uncle Tom's Cabin" days, the Middle West was *the* West. Mississippi was developing a powerful oligarchy, which culminated in the rule of Jefferson Davis, in Washington, D. C., as Secretary of War, just before the Civil War. The Far South was the center of solemn, self-conscious authority.

The prairie country was the West, "Wild and Wooly," where *"most anything"* might happen!

Abraham Lincoln ultimately became the representative

of Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, and Kansas. The western borders of this region were developing the range system whereby, over unfenced lands, free to all, great herds were driven north from Texas, for the yearly slaughter.

So the cowboy was being evolved. The Middle West, therefore, was the region east of the cowboy, west of those forests on the western slopes of the Appalachians, and north of the slave country bordered by the Ohio and the Missouri.

It was not then Middle, it was "West." Lincoln was elected as a *far* western man.

Victory came to the North.

The black dirt of the prairies, six to twenty feet deep, began to produce taller and taller corn; the Rockies began to develop a miners' West; barbed wire came, and the cowboy began to disappear; thus the Old West was pocketed and became "Middle." It became what it is today in its essential character.

The general Middle West state of mind spreads beyond the seven states we have listed. Tobacco has gone much farther north than the Ohio River; corn has gone south into Kentucky and Tennessee, and into Missouri and on to the Gulf, wheat has moved west through the deserts of western Kansas, Nebraska, North and South Dakota; more and more land that seems arid grows deep-root winter wheat from its winter snows; and the Middle West may be, in general, any prairie-corn, or prairie-wheat country between the Rockies and the Cordilleras, where the state of mind has followed the crops.

It was the first character of this country that, because the

Indians burned its forests centuries ago to capture game, it was a treeless plain for the most part. In western Kansas, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota, the hasty settler has planted the cottonwood along the streams as the quickest growing wind-break. Nevertheless, the hot and rainless wind sweeps across all summer; and the wheat seems to bake into its climax of harvest. The cottonwood still awaits the slower growing trees that it hopes to shelter, and one must have a passion for the sky line, an inevitable instinct for the horizon, such as that of Willa Cather, to understand this region.

The far eastern borders of the Middle West have been planted long ago. As a matter of fact, forests were still there along the big rivers in many places.

The word, "backwoodsman" was synonymous with "westerner" before men moved a little further on to plow the plains. The word "Hoosier" was developed in the woods of the western slope of the Appalachians that stretched long fingers into the plain.

In these reaches of forest, Johnny Appleseed planted his first orchards. It is natural that these borders of the Middle West which most closely touch the East of the United States, should be best understood by the men of the seaboard. Therefore, Ohio is the most popular middle western state, with people on the seaboard. They can get there in one night's run from anywhere on the Atlantic Coast. When it becomes necessary in the routine of national party organization to give the Middle West its due, a presidential candidate is often picked from Ohio, the most endurable and understandable middle western state from the eastern stand-

point. Therefore, the honor roll of Ohio presidents, and of defeated presidential aspirants.

We find that the Middle West goes as far as the black dirt prairie goes; a land on which it is almost too easy to build railroads and automobile highways, the grading and financing is so simple. It is not like finding one's way through terrible mountains. The prosperity which makes this makes every other type of unification easy; and newspapers like the *Kansas City Star* and the *Chicago Tribune* speak for whole regions, on many issues that are seemingly paramount.

But my beautiful friend, who reads much and well in world letters and thinks deeply, gives this region the title "That Undiscovered Country." And gives it ironically. She means that if any man can get any fun out of a red-hot cornfield in July, let him. What do corn and hogs mean to Edmund Spenser or to Spenser's "Færie Queen"?

She means that all the U. S. A. is given to a pillowy, billowy smothering of those who aspire; and that free speech is smothered by people of the middle western and Chautauqua point of view all over the United States.

Overeating is indeed a dangerous thing; and on the whole, middle westerners have too much to eat, too many automobiles, too easy communication, too rich soil, and often an outrageous complacency: they often have the blinking expression that comes after a pious Sunday dinner.

But the Middle West is a mixture of streams of immigration; and there is a legend there so great that the present cannot down it, and the future is written in pages of flame.

There were first completely mingled younger sons and daughters of the original thirteen states.

The peculiar pride of the South mixed with the iron mind of the Emersonian.

The result was a standard of self-reliance and freedom and dignity which finds its ultimate hope in the tradition around Springfield, Illinois, and in the legends that haunt that place.

There are, in my dreaming mind, two pictures of the Middle West which have nothing to do with state fairs too prosperous, Chautauquas too complacent. I remember a nipping day, the first of January, when I walked with a lovely friend to this, our Sangamon, from Springfield. We were there for the afternoon on this high bluff surrounded by this forest that is a contradiction of the formula of the middlemost Middle West.

On this bluff, in nipping frost, we built the tiniest fire imaginable, of leaves and twigs, for our incantation. The smoke went straight to the sky through the snow in a thread of blue. It was all a mystery and a hope; and the dreams around that fire it would take me a hundred years to tell.

I could tell you twenty legends now, some literally true according to the school-books, some born of the smoke of the gray leaves, all of them from that fire and our Sangamon, all of them as deep as life or death or love to me.

Those legends and those chronicles haunt me day and night; and they have nothing to do with hasty definitions of the Middle West. They stretch as far into the future as the speculations of H. G. Wells; and as far into the caveman past as the speculations of Clarence Darrow, the Chicago

lawyer. And they have far more to do with the smoke and flame of life than men of this realistic type can know. Fires like these are built on many a bluff of our Sangamon, on many a gray day by little lovers, in forests that are as primeval as any forest of the newer West, and as far from the automobile and the filling station as is the millennium.

Such people as these at least have courage and free speech. The general assumption that there is neither courage nor free speech in the Middle West leaves out fire builders of our sort. I can name twenty men of national position who say just what they please, by voice and book. Several of these men are of middle western origin.

But this is not the issue of my argument—the title of which is "The Definition of the Middle West."

One can never really define anything; one can only illustrate it. For quite an elucidation of that thought, read Matthew Arnold on "The Grand Style." For a humble illustration of this same thought, let us point to the lovers and their fire, and let the fire be a symbol of the midmost middleness of the Middle West.

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN, THE ORTHODOX JEFFERSONIAN, CONCERNING LAWYERS AND THE LIKE

To hold men together by paper and seal, or by compulsion, is no account;
That only holds men together which aggregates all in a living principle, as the hold of the limbs of the body, or the fibres of plants.

Of all races and eras, These States, with veins full of poetical stuff, most need poets, and are to have the greatest, and use them the greatest;
Their Presidents shall not be their common referee so much as their poets shall.

. . . . . .

Who, having consider'd the Body, finds all its organs and parts good;
Who, out of the theory of the earth, and of his or her body, understands by subtle analogies all other theories,
The theory of a city, a poem, and of the large politics of These States;
Who believes not only in our globe, with its sun and moon, but in other globes, with their suns and moons;
Who, constructing the house of himself or herself, not for a day, but for all time, sees races, eras, dates, generations,
The past, the future, dwelling there, like space, inseparable together.

. . . . . .

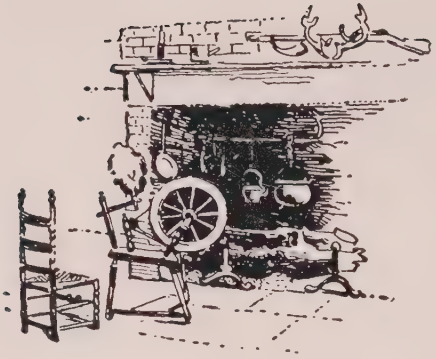
When a university course convinces, like a slumbering woman and child convince;
When the minted gold in the vault smiles like the night watchman's daughter;

When warrantee deeds loaf in chairs opposite, and are my friendly companions;
I intend to reach them my hand, and make as much of them as I do of men and women like you.

The sum of all known reverence I add up in you, whoever you are;
The President is there in the White House for you—it is not you who are here for him;
The Secretaries act in their bureaus for you—not you here for them;
The Congress convenes every Twelfth-month for you,
Laws, courts, the forming of States, the charters of cities, the going and coming of commerce and mails, are all for you.

List close, my scholars dear!
All doctrines, all politics and civilization, exurge from you;
All sculpture and monuments, and anything inscribed anywhere, are tallied in you;
The gist of histories and statistics as far back as the records reach, is in you this hour, and myths and tales the same;
If you were not breathing and walking here, where would they all be?
The most renown'd poems would be ashes, orations and plays would be vacuums.

All architecture is what you do to it when you look upon it;
(Did you think it was in the white or gray stone? or the lines or the arches and cornices?)



THE LITANY OF THE MIDDLE WEST

(This is a story supposed to be told to a group on the Lake Front North of Chicago.)

Several doors to the south on Fifth Street in Springfield, near my home, all my life I walked by a rather unpretentious house. It was a two-story frame dwelling, looking about fifty years old, with a little porch, a tree or two, a small lawn, and a very small flower garden. All the dark cynics about the Middle West might easily say that in such houses was brewed its present heaviness, its complete lack of appeal to their imagination.

Springfield had a population of sixty thousand, and in any town of sixty thousand in the Middle West, two-thirds of the houses looked like that about fifty years ago. It was inhabited by the sort of quiet neighbors you never hear from; and no man knows how many quiet families have come and gone throughout its history.

At last someone bought that corner for a three-story brick residence, of some pretensions, and wreckers began to rip away the white clapboards and scrape off

the shingles. Then the building became Springfield's wonder for a day.

It was actually a log cabin of the very earliest times, and a two-story log cabin at that. It had been inclosed in sawed boards and fitted with plaster and wall paper, and all modern conveniences; and the logs, almost a foot thick, had been long forgotten; the floors beneath the floors made of hewn logs had been a buried mystery; and the plastered-up fireplace had been a center of incantation long lost. Now all was open. The magnificent walnut logs were there for all to see; and the memory of Sangamon County, when it was the rail splitter's Far West, and not a mere Middle West, was before us. Though the wreckers had torn down this log cabin in a week, and though the new brick residence is on the corner now, that log cabin is eternal, and a symbol of all we desire.

I have dreamed of the fire I built on the bluff by the Sangamon River in my youth, and of this log cabin. Let us tell a story which is read to us by that Ancient Mariner, on the edge of the prairie sea, that Ancient Mariner whose name is Springfield.

He says, "I came to that corner one evening and found the log cabin there, complete in its ancient state, lighted by candles, and with the hearth fire burning. There were three women by the fire. They were spinning. They were from "That Undiscovered Country." They were from the Land of the Grave, which is eternal. They were three young fates.

"There were others in the room, western boys and men of the old time, about their evening affairs, reading, smoking, talking, their hunting shirts hanging on the wall along with

old rifles and skins of animals. But the greatest thing about this log cabin was the hearth fire itself, leaping up the chimney, sending up into the air and over the village crystalline flying books, with wings and leaves of gold, books which are some day to come in visions to all the citizens of Springfield, telling to each man a separate and beautiful story of his future.

Who are these three women by the fire? Surely two of them have nothing to do with the log cabin fancies of old Springfield. One of them is a woman who died ages ago in a dream of William Shakespeare. She is in the costume of Verona, and her name is Juliet. The other is the woman who dominated the greatest moment of France, in its grimmest chronicle. She is a woman who died for France. She sits here in honor before this fire, one of the three fates of this dream, and her name is Joan of Arc.

It is easy to tell who Juliet is, who Joan of Arc is; the world has been told for generations; and the very sounding of their names is the echo of their story. There is the great official trial and retrial of Joan of Arc, with every inch of her chronicle sworn and certified in open court; and there is the tribute of Thomas De Quincey and the magnificent tribute of Mark Twain. She is a girl whom great men, majestic men, men who have towered above their ages, fall before and reverence. The more mature their judgment and the more distinguished their command over the minds and souls of nations the more apt they are to be set aflame by the saintly fire of Joan of Arc. Juliet, the dream of William Shakespeare, lifted from the dusty chronicle, has become a living word for all time; a young girl of thirteen, but woman-

hood forever. Joan of Arc died for the love of France; Juliet for the love of Romeo; and these are two of the young spinners of the thread of fate, by this log cabin hearth fire, in Springfield, Illinois. They are spinning the thread of the fate of a man who will die for the love of a land.

Because of this, so long as they are guests in this mere log cabin, in this Middle Western town of world pilgrimage, they are handmaidens of the third girl who sits in plain

homespun with them, a comrade forever in the glory of her name. Singers and very great singers have already spoken her praise; and her dust still cries from the ground. She is the golden-haired Anne Rutledge; and in perfect innocence she tells her handmaidens that she has just come for a day, from the nearby town of New Salem on the Sangamon, from her father's tavern.

She sings as she spins, an ardent Methodist hymn, very simple and very alien to these Old World maidens whose hearts were given to the High Mass. And then she tells the other two how she has come to Springfield to attend

court for a day, and that her young man back in New Salem, keeping store, approves of such amusements and himself reads law by her father's fireplace in New Salem tonight. Springfield is a wild adventure to this little girl. She has come over the very muddiest roads, horseback with her father, through the grimmest, marshiest, chills-and-fever landscape, for the land is still undrained. There is no such thing as tile in the fields yet.

Anne Rutledge has had a wonderful day in Springfield, for she has bought calico at the general store, calico of a kind not sold in the log village of New Salem, and she is going back with half a dozen sundries and a new law book for her boy, Abraham Lincoln; and with new shoes that she will wear when she walks with him to meeting and by the Sangamon River under the moon. It will be many a day before Abraham Lincoln comes to live at Springfield, old before his time from a broken heart, because of the death of this girl.

But this is a gala day with Anne; and her adventure in the tiny court room, a very gentle piece of litigation indeed over some farmer's boundary line, is to her a wild revel, just because her young man is studying law by the firelight in New Salem tonight.

The others understand. Juliet knows, for have there not been Montague streets and Capulet streets in Verona, and dreadful disputed boundary lines between them? And did not Joan of Arc try to discover what, precisely, were the boundaries of France, and trace them with the point of her drawn sword? So they understand little golden-haired Anne Rutledge's prattle of the boundary between two Indian-corn

farms, settled in a sleepy Springfield law court. She pictures two gesticulating lawyers in butternut shirts and breeches, wearing yarn-knitted suspenders, and taking off their coats as a gesture in the climax. This question of

boundaries will again go far. And when Anne Rutledge is in the dust, her young man, now reading by a New Salem firelight, will be trying to settle forever the exact meaning of that terrible phrase, Mason and Dixon's line.

The three girl fates spin on and on, by the fire, from which come flying books. Anne Rutledge has made a visit to Springfield.

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN ON THE PERFECT WOMAN AND THE PERFECT FLAG

With all thy gifts, America,
(Standing secure, rapidly tending, overlooking the world,)
Power, wealth, extent, vouchsafed to thee—With these, and like of these, vouchsafed to thee,
What if one gift thou lackest? (the ultimate human problem never solving;)
The gift of Perfect Women fit for thee—What of that gift of gifts thou lackest?
The towering Feminine of thee? the beauty, health, completion, fit for thee?
The Mothers fit for thee?

. . . . . .

All thine, O sacred Union!
Ship, farm, shop, barns, factories, mines,
City and State—North, South, item and aggregate,
We dedicate, dread Mother, all to thee!
Protectress absolute, thou! Bulwark of all!
For well we know that while thou givest each and all, (generous as God,)
Without thee, neither all nor each, nor land, home,
Ship, nor mine—nor any here, this day, secure,
Nor aught, nor any day secure.

. . . . . .

And thou, thy Emblem, waving over all!
Delicate beauty! a word to thee, (it may be salutary;)
Remember, thou hast not always been, as here today, so comfortably ensovereign'd;
In other scenes than these have I observ'd thee, flag;

THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

Not quite so trim and whole, and freshly blooming, in folds of stainless silk;
But I have seen thee, bunting, to tatters torn, upon thy splinter'd staff,
Or clutch'd to some young color-bearer's breast, with desperate hands,
Savagely struggled for, for life or death—fought over long,
'Mid cannon's thunder-crash, and many a curse, and groan and yell—and rifle-volleys cracking sharp,
And moving masses, as wild demons surging—and lives as nothing risk'd,
For thy mere remnant, grimed with dirt and smoke, and sopp'd in blood;
For sake of that, my beauty—and that thou might'st dally, as now, secure up there,
Many a good man have I seen go under.

THE LONELINESS OF WALT WHITMAN, STATESMAN-POET

(This imaginary discourse is presumed to be given by a United States Troubadour to an entirely different crowd, in a Greenwich Village restaurant, 2 A.M.)

Let us approach this issue, for once, with a proper sense of humor, in Old Holland and Flemish costumes.

Whitman's Birthday is May 31. It is too solemnly celebrated by long-haired, squeaky highbrows at sad, dirty, and radical "banquets." It will be long before his Birthday is a national institution, but it will come. Born at the top of May, the United States May Pole dances should be dated May 31 for him. People like Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn should lead the way. Till we forget the man, and remember the Poet and Orator, this will not be possible. Read the quotations, and forget the biographers. This discourse is against the man as he is thrust upon us by his fanatical followers, and biographers of all schools.

You ask my opinion about the place of Walt Whitman

in hero-worship? He is "in my humble opinion" as big a poet as his most emphatic admirer makes him out to be. John Burroughs and also the latest Thibetan to discover "Leaves of Grass" are right about the book. But Whitman is no hero, and much turns on this. Stephen Graham has generally reported me most kindly and most generously. But in one place he has me wrong. He says I prefer Longfellow to Whitman. No, I prefer Whitman to Longfellow. I agree with the whole of Greenwich Village about "Leaves of Grass." I agree with them about Longfellow's poems. But I prefer Andrew Jackson to either man, as a "hero." Here I part with the Village.

Those who are impatient with the citizens of the U. S. A. for not surrendering abjectly to Walt Whitman, and producing an army of singers and citizens of the same style, are blaming a people, when they should blame one of the habits of art history. Walt Whitman, like Milton and Michael Angelo, has the grand style, with all the fatalities of the grand style for imitators or slavish admirers. Michael Angelo's art destroyed the Renaissance. All who imitated him were destroyed, and his manner was so infectious that he bred generations of pompous "little giants." It was a sound instinct in all those who refused to be in any way infected. Those who imitated Donatello might still grow into themselves, but the sculptor or painter touched to imitation by Michael Angelo was forever distended. Michael Angelo was the only volcano with the lava to fill a crater so gigantic. All the others burned with fires of straw. Not till William Blake was there a draughtsman or painter who could take over the manner of Michael Angelo—without

being destroyed by it. He was, first, a man of letters, and is still for the most part a literary tradition on the edge of the art world. He had lava enough to fill that old crater, however.

I should say that we are fortunate in Sandburg, who owes a direct debt to Whitman, without being destroyed by him. But we may find in this a reason parallel to the triumph of Blake. Sandburg is something more than a Whitmanite. And there is only one Sandburg, not an army of a million singing Sandburgs. The parallel of Whitman with Milton —as a destroying influence—is even more precise. No imitator of Milton, so far as I know, ever gained a fully authoritative place, even for a time, except Mr. Young, the distinguished author of the "Night Thoughts," and Mr. Young is now forgotten. Certainly we do not have a million democratic Miltonites. I hold that young imitators of Donatello, or Wordsworth, are not in artistic danger. Such masters are "democratic" enough, and such direct and simple masters keep the talent an elastic child, not overstrained, till it finds its own direction. And there is no demand that they evangelize as well as carve or write. It is a sound instinct to leave the author of a grand style as solitary as the politicians leave George Washington. It is a sound instinct to admire him—but to begin again. Andrew Jackson showed that sound instinct in fighting Washington. There was something in it deeper than politics. Andrew Jackson foresaw the two-cent stamp, and the Gilbert Stuart portraits. The only direct imitation of George Washington's grand style I know is Robert E. Lee. I prefer J. E. B. Stuart, as a hero of the Confederacy.

He who would have a grand style—must begin again. And it is personally and artistically, even then, a perilous business. It has been achieved in the Woolworth Tower. But in no imitation thereof, direct or indirect. Yet see the successful variations of the bungalow theme. And *Scribner's Magazine* and *Harper's Magazine* are just alike, and "little masterpieces."

Another reason the citizens of the United States do not fall down before Whitman in poetry as they do before Lincoln in statesmanship—is that there are no interesting details to Whitman. He might even be compared to a bound volume of Daniel Webster's Orations. But there is no such perpetual distension either in the letters and speeches of Lincoln or the incidents of his life. He gets down off his high horse the minute the great occasion is over. With Whitman this is not a land, but a sea, with one wave about the size of every other wave. It is all horizon line, and no gossip, except suppressed gossip. Lincoln's best biographer is his battered, gossiping old law partner Herndon, who told every tale out of school, and yet left his hero standing. The bold Whitman concealed most of the essential facts of his life, and biographically is best at a distance, like certain bare mountains or half-extinct volcanoes. Yet Whitman claims—and his fanatical followers claim for him—a personal devotion. A literary and personal devotion has been accorded to Lincoln, though he asked only a political following. Whitman's followers claim for him a devotion beyond the wildest that was ever accorded to Lincoln at the height of the Civil War. Now this has nothing to do with art or literature, yet is thoroughly mixed up with Whitman's

alleged claim, till it almost ruins the claim. He seems to make it himself. But his followers have misread him. They thrust him upon us like Buddha, Prince Siddartha. What men in history have rightly won a personal devotion? The first, in my opinion, is Prince Siddartha. The second that occurs to me is St. Francis. These are my heroes tonight. As for St. Francis, he won the allegiance of saints and sinners. But "The Little Flowers of St. Francis" records a life that was a masterpiece. Whitman's book was a masterpiece, but his life was only half that good.

Or for an instance of deserved worship take a pagan, a great mixer—Raphael. His life was a cup of wine. He died "worn out with love and labor." But there was no trick to it. That hand was the same fabric of flesh as the pictures. The eye was the same eye. This only happens once in hundreds of years—that the man is the same excellent fabric as his art. Whitman claimed to be such a man. He was not. He, personally, was in the same class with Santa Claus and Longfellow when he behaved, and when he did not behave he was something like the King in "Huckleberry Finn," an admirable man in some respects, but no leader, neither Caesar nor Brutus.

Leadership, the kind that shines through all the mists of the centuries, sacramental leadership—where the very body and blood of the leader is identified with his work—is seldom the gift of the artists, or we would have gods, and not men, very soon. Buddha did not write. Socrates did not write. It left them the strength to make an art of life. So, in some sense, they made their very bodies sacraments. Probably no pupil of Plato ever made the claim for his person-

ality he continually made for the personality of Socrates. Yet your true Whitmanite would combine the general consequence and weight of these two men and call it Whitman. And the puzzled citizens of the United States grow suspicious. *Whitman can never be any nearer to them than Milton, and Milton's private conduct is not thrust upon them even in vague and dull metaphor as the supreme model of heroic democracy—though he went blind in what to him was a holy cause, the radicalism and democracy of his time.* Whitman, personally, has less real ginger in his life than the Damaged Souls of Gamaliel Bradford. For courage and style John Randolph of Roanoke was a whole lot more of a man; for frankness and variety of incident Barnum outshines Whitman, and for thumping democracy Benjamin F. Butler is more of a unit, with all his sins. I can admire a devil—but he must have some salt. *I can admire also an angel—but he must have some personal lightning. Not all the personal tales about Whitman equal the single simple narrative of John Randolph, fresh from hunting, marching into Congress and down the aisle with his hound-dogs in front of him and a dog-whip in his hand.*

I will grant for Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" everything ever said in its praise by the wildest French critic. But the thesis of Whitman's followers is that we must follow him personally. Which would mean we must be lost in clouds and deliberate obscurities and personal secrecies. We have not even an apocryphal cherry-tree story to cling to. The people, if they love a man as a hero of romance, must know as much about him as Spain knew of Don Quixote or knows of Henry Ford. *We want a few details.*

There is no true confession in Whitman. Mark Twain tells on himself. In "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" he tells on himself as a youth. In "The Mysterious Stranger" he tells on himself as an old man. *And if his publishers had not been busy indeed in holding it back, we would have had more confession.* Therefore he has a growing "personal" leadership, by no means what is claimed for Whitman, but nearer to the Great Democrat whose sins are a secular sacrament than Whitman's fanatical followers can ever make of him for us.

Finally, Whitman—both as a man and a poet—fails in his definition of United States democracy, in an essential matter, which our girls must dance off on May Day, and forgive, with a proper sense of humor that will rescue a great and unknown statesman, from his "biographers," etc.

He has no chivalry. His heroines are neither mediæval nor modern. They are sometimes the fat and foolish on pillowy pulchritudinous clouds who decorate the court paintings of Peter Paul Rubens. Rubens is also magnificent, epic, —but no one ever claimed for him, personally, the one and only spot-light and divine honors. Like Whitman he went forward serving a muse who was indeed a thumping giantess, fair, fat, and occasionally fish-eyed, frail and forty. But she neither demands nor inspires chivalry. And chivalry is one of the indestructible elements that no leveling process has ever wiped out of life. It grows and takes new beautiful forms even here. The attitude of this American Hollander toward women was often like that of the great Dutch and Flemish masters of painting, not that of "My Cid."

I remember the birth of the Gibson Girl. We all, high

and low, gave her a breathless devotion. Mary Pickford is a person of appalling simplicity, but chivalry is the essence of the United States dream of her. And do you remember the reign of Grover Cleveland's bride? Edgar Lee Masters' most heart-searching poems are "Anne Rutledge" and "Lucinda Matlock." Chivalry is of the essence of these poems.

The daughter of the poorest poor white may win a place in one of our inter-state beauty contests, and the prize will not be for cheap silliness. Even in this there is more austerity, more Athenian grace and more chivalry than in all of Whitman.

Even our most elementary democracy understands that beauty is a proud, filigree, butterfly humming-bird thing. *O. Henry's little shop girls, always his heroines no matter how dull, had yet their moments when they were high-bred.* They were all craving honor and worship, the most delicate flowers and honors our tournament could give, and the most filigree crowns in sight. There is no lace in Whitman's democracy, though there is lace on the Negro baby's cap, and there are delicate feathers in the war-bonnet of the Indian.

"Robin Hood" is to be seen in this little town next week. Pretty soon comes "The Covered Wagon." They are both famous films, both essentially democratic—and breathe from end to end of chivalry, chivalry. All men must be equal, but all little girls must be queens! We demand in the U. S. A. millions of queens, forever and ever.

The root of the matter was in Mark Twain. He worshiped Joan of Arc as some old southern Colonel might

worship his favorite daughter or niece. He was after all only an old southern Colonel disguised as a humorist. And in his worship of Joan of Arc all that old chivalry came forth. No devotion of knight to maiden was ever more abject or magnificent.

No one is going to cure us of the worship of women who are good and beautiful, by any kind of silly theory, even though it be from the latest medical book. No doctor will ever cure little boys of buying lace valentines for pretty little girls.

I have recited in hundreds of high school assemblies in this country, from Maine to California, assemblies two thousand strong, and giving for my delectation all their yells. But the chivalry was there. The girls were all potential

movie queens—but still queens, and not fat fish-wives, and it was perfectly obvious the boys feared and loved them. Their athletic contests all have the flavor of Valentine's Day and the old tournaments combined. And this in the high school —where youth is at its rawest stage, and really the most "democratic" period of its existence in the Whitman sense. They are children of "Robin Hood," and of "The Covered Wagon" heroics.

Whitman will probably be separated from the democracy as Milton and Michael Angelo are. After all both those men had a passionately democratic theory of life, *nearer Whitman's than we will admit.*

But their "grand style" is a peril to artists and personal imitators. Those who come after them in democracy, in citizenship, or in art, must begin again with other models, even if their final goal is the grand style. It is good medicine, but bad food. Whitman urges it upon us as food. Sandburg has taken it as medicine only.

Whitman will survive outside the main line of tradition as a gigantic lonely individual. *He cannot take now the central place, for he has no heroines, not even a Juliet nor a "little shop girl."* Anne Rutledge is nearer to being our ultimate sweetheart and the Virgin Mary nearer to being our ultimate Queen than all the glad Jezebels of Whitman. There is not one valentine in him. And ours is a land of valentines, white lace valentines.

But on Whitman's birthday let the girls have a sense of humor, forget being queens for a day and dance around the Maypole in hearty flamboyant old Dutch and Flemish costumes.

Remember, he will be, with Jefferson, a *statesman*, in a thousand years. And for a thousand years with this expectancy, as though the statesman's position had been already granted, our Maypole dances should be given May 31, on his birthday in his honor.

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN AS A WORLD-CONQUERING DEMOCRATIC STATESMAN

It seems to me I can look over and behold them in Germany, Italy, France, Spain,
Or far, far away, in China, or in Russia or Japan, talking other dialects,
And it seems to me if I could know these men I should become attached to them as I do to men in my own lands,
O I know we should be brethren and lovers,
I know I should be happy with them.

. . . . . .

Passage to more than India!
Are thy wings plumed indeed for such far flights?
O Soul, voyagest thou indeed on voyages like these?
Disportest thou on waters such as these?
Soundest below the Sanscrit and the Vedas?
Then have thy bent unleash'd.

Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas!
Passage to you, to mastership of you, ye strangling problems!
You, strew'd with the wrecks of skeletons, that, living, never reach'd you.

. . . . . .

Passage to more than India!
O secret of the earth and sky!
Of you, O waters of the sea! O winding creeks and rivers!
Of you, O woods and fields! Of you, strong mountains of my land!
Of you, O prairies! Of you, gray rocks!
O morning red! O clouds! O rain and snows!
O day and night, passage to you!

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THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

(To U. S. G., return'd from his World's Tour.)

What best I see in thee,
Is not that where thou mov'st down history's great highways,
Ever undimm'd by time shoots warlike victory's dazzle,
Or that thou sat'st where Washington sat, ruling the land in peace,
Or thou the man whom feudal Europe fêted, venerable Asia swarm'd upon,
Who walk'd with kings with even pace the round world's promenade;
But that in foreign lands, in all thy walks with kings,
Those prairie sovereigns of the West, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois,
Ohio's, Indiana's millions, comrades, farmers, soldiers, all to the front,
Invisibly with thee walking with kings with even pace the round world's promenade.
We all so justified.

. . . . . .

I will make a song for These States, that no one State may under any circumstances be subjected to another State;
And I will make a song that there shall be comity by day and by night between all The States, and between any two of them:
And I will make a song for the ears of the President, full of weapons with menacing points,

. . . . . .

Thick-sprinkled bunting! Flag of stars!
Long yet your road, fateful flag!—long yet your road, and lined with bloody death!
For the prize I see at issue, at last is the world!
All its ships and shores I see, interwoven with your threads, greedy banner!
—Dream'd again the flags of kings, highest born, to flaunt unrival'd?
O hasten, flag of man! O with sure and steady step, passing highest flags of kings,
Walk supreme to the heavens, mighty symbol—run up above the mall,
Flag of stars! thick-sprinkled bunting!

Grant entering an Indian village near Lucknow.

A VISION, CALLED: "LINCOLN IN INDIA"

(This is an oration, presumed to be given on the banks of the Ganges today, by a United States Troubador.)

How does Lincoln get to India? By the long route of his world-conquest.

Let us begin in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's home-town, with arguments and pageantries and visions and revelations.

Springfield, Illinois, is becoming super-national.

By the year 2000 it will be a shrine like some of the world shrines of religion. Our material and governmental United States is now an internal and involuted empire, with every prospect of remaining so. Great highways of the earth and the air more and more move toward the heart of the Middle West from the Pacific and the Atlantic.

Countless automobile parties "seeing America first," go to our city on their summer vacations, for a day or a week,

put up at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, or the Leland, or the St. Nicholas; visit the Lincoln residence, the Lincoln tomb, visit the sites of Lincoln's three law offices; and sometimes these visitors trace his pathway through the central Illinois region.

Owing to new state roads and the automobile, Springfield, Illinois, may be said to extend over Sangamon County (of which it is the county seat, with the picturesque old court house that was once the capitol). The city limits are what they used to be officially, but the whole list of counties gathered around Sangamon is part of the growing legend.

People traveling through are no doubt charmed by New Salem, Illinois. It is only an hour or so away, by automobile, northwest of Springfield. There, on a bluff and wooded hill, over the Sangamon River, has been rebuilt with historical mellowness and meditative care the little log village which had utterly disappeared; the place where Lincoln kept store and did his first courting; where Ann Rutledge lived and died.

Petersburg, Illinois, is but a short distance away, and there Ann Rutledge is buried, with Edgar Lee Masters' poem on a great stone over her grave. Petersburg is really New Salem, moved to the railroad which came through afterward, which missed the older town by only a little way.

These things, often taken in by the tourists from coast to coast, are observed seriously, if in a sight-seeing way. And haste cannot destroy the charm of the Lincoln residence at Springfield as at present furnished and conducted by the state of Illinois, it is such an instant and beautiful raising of the curtain; and the New Salem bluff is a complete sur-

prise, it is such a scene for the Indian corn prairie. The woods crowd close to the Sangamon River and climb the hill toward the microscopic log town, and there is no vandalism short of the torch of some incredible invader that could visually spoil this place, even for the impatient traveler's family, jammed into the big touring car like sardines.

But this is not the only type of Springfield and New Salem pilgrimage. There are the more lyrical visitors—all schools and sorts.

Harriet Monroe comes down from Chicago, as the queen bee of our poetry, then returns to Chicago, and writes a lovely song about Ann Rutledge or writes one of her closely packed essays championing the West, and the Middle West, to be printed in the back of her magazine. Her editorials are about two hundred words long, the most compact in the U. S. A.

Or, returning from Springfield, Harriet Monroe takes counsel with that poet she was the first to decorate with bays, now making his place in the Anglo-Saxon world, Carl Sandburg of Chicago. He is still of *The Chicago Daily News,* if you please, the only newspaper man par excellence who is also a poet par excellence. He too is full of arguments and pageantries and visions and revelations about the whole West and Middle West. All newspaper men I meet, seem to take a proprietary pleasure in his glory.

Carl Sandburg comes down from Chicago on a still hunt, to my home-town, and I note that he goes over every foot of Lincoln ground, with nobody knowing *"he is Carl Sandburg";* and produces his two volumes on Lincoln—"The Prairie Years."

The Masters family, Edgar Lee Masters and many of his connection, are identified with central Illinois, some of them with Springfield. All Masters' writing makes the journey to Springfield, then branches out toward some of the more rural counties, lingers long around Petersburg and New Salem, raises Stephen A. Douglas from the dead, returns to Springfield, and then goes round the world.

Masters is fond of the typical old fiddler, such as "Fiddler Jones," the real hero of "Spoon River." These men of music are still in odd corners of the central Illinois cornfield, and their daguerrotyped memories of the fiddling days before the Civil War are the beginning of Edgar Lee Masters, the man of letters, and world-bard.

When Attorney Hardin W. Masters, father of Edgar Lee Masters, was still living, I used to meet the two on the streets of Springfield, full of new jolly stories of their finding old fiddlers, on some recent quest.

Springfield is already a national dream, a music, a hope, and the best place for dreamers in America, though the nation hardly knows it, though the city hardly knows it.

New hotels going up! New highways going through! More impressive state buildings being planned! Parking schemes for the Sangamon River afoot! But these projects are still assumed to be in the day's work, almost as those of any other state capital that is struggling.

The pilgrims keep coming. Every pilgrim foot makes Springfield more of a Federal city, for Lincoln is in the heart of every one. Every pilgrim makes it nearer to supernational.

I hold that by the year 2000 this procession of our

dreamers will make for us a school of the prophets, indeed, out of Sangamon County mists and old fiddle-tunes, and easy chatter and serious talk in the shadow and sun.

I have been told stories by an Ancient Mariner holding me with his glittering eye. These are the adventures of the children born in the year 2000, adventures which begin just when they finish high school or college; that is, when they are around 18 or 22, the divine and the most divining time of life. Surely that generation will have a very definite education and direction developed in them by the entire American people, which will make them dreamers, revealers, city-builders, indeed, capital-city builders, indeed.

The stories of these boys and girls have taken many apocalyptic forms in the mind of my Ancient Mariner and Fiddler, though he reads them first from a "Flying Book of Sangamon County," and Springfield.

He is no planner of Utopias, in the usual Edward Bellamy sense. I hope to tell his whole thousand and one stories in a thousand and one paragraphs before I die. I hope to reproduce his fiddle-tunes, that he learned from Thomas Jefferson, or from this book I shall speak of. These stories are the very life of my life, and of my ambition.

They have all been given me by "Springfield" as a sort of person, not Lincoln incarnate, but "The Old Fiddling Middle West" incarnate, holding me with his glittering eye. He is an Ancient Mariner on our prairie sea, yet an Edgar Lee Masters old fiddler.

Possibly the very fact that a thousand and one stories seem to spring from the lips of this Ancient Mariner at once

makes it difficult to tell any one of them well. They crowd upon each other's heels, in my mind.

The Ancient Mariner confirms my thesis, indeed, that it is written that surely Springfield, Illinois, is to be National and Federal as the District of Columbia is.

Any reader of this article going there on pilgrimage will go away telling in his own fashion his own apocalyptic stories read from his own book of vision, splendid hopes of the future of the forty-eight states, and of the Pilgrim City, where pilgrims already come from Africa, China, Japan, India.

The Ancient Mariner and Fiddler says that Central Illinois is straight west from the Old South; that is, if you draw a line from the old college town of Bethany, West Virginia, or from Richmond, Virginia, or Washington, D. C., you will come close to the "Lincoln Country" in Illinois, and I interrupt him to say that south of Springfield some people are "still voting for Andrew Jackson," in that region called "Egypt." On the other hand, if you draw a line straight west from Boston, Massachusetts, it will go straight through the office of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse,* 232 East Erie Street, Chicago. It is somewhat humiliating, of course, to the eastern seaboard that thinks itself so long and varied, to realize that from Chicago to Cairo the State of Illinois has chunks and tiny parallel zones of our whole south and our whole north.

But alas! my friendly Ancient Mariner-Fiddler assures me that it is the case, all based on the inevitable disposition of the pioneer to walk straight toward the sunset, on the parallel of latitude on which he happened to be born.

Great grandsons of Scandinavians around Rockford, of Italians around Cairo!

Turn to your globe in the corner, study the parallels of latitude. The one going straight west from Chicago reaches the city of Turkistan, half-way around the world. One drawn straight west from Cairo, Illinois, goes through the mountains of far northern India. One drawn straight west from Springfield, Illinois, goes through the city of Samarkand, half-way round the world.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says that there are two highways of the imagination which illustrate the disposition of the whole world from of old, to walk westward on parallels of latitude, after sailing westward on parallels of latitude. One we will call "The Johnny Appleseed Highway."

Johnny Appleseed (John Chapman), in his human form, did not get as far west as Illinois; but he tramped toward it, straight west from the Boston region, in the days of President Washington, planting apple orchards and fencing them in, in spaces in the primeval woods. He wandered all over Ohio; and over much more of eastern Indiana than is usually known.

He was the New England kind of saint, much like a Hindu saint, akin to Thoreau and Emerson who came after him; the sort of man who needed an Emerson to write an essay about him. But he had no Emerson.

He was a Swedenborgian, which would have made him especially interesting to Emerson. He preached Swedenborg to the Indian witch doctors in his youth, and in his old age to the Disciple preachers and other stubborn souls on the frontier; and though he converted few, he kept his doc-

trines and visions sufficiently warm within himself to be able to dress like the hardiest Red Indian or Hindu mountain-saint. He was naked like a savage, he was alone on the far Red Indian frontier and worshiped by the aborigines.

Kipling never heard of him. But he was like Kipling's Perun Bhagat; miracles, legends, and all.

And he kept moving for a lifetime toward the sunset, on what we would call "The Mystical Johnny Appleseed Highway," leaving in his wake orchards bursting and foaming with rich fruit, gifts for mankind to find long after. He was, viewed realistically, the ultimate self-immolating New England sage, in many ways closer to Emerson than to Thoreau; and nearer to Emerson's self-reliant man than any other we can think of now from New England, but Emerson himself.

If you do not like the title, "The Johnny Appleseed Highway," reread Emerson's essay on "Self-Reliance"; and call it "The Self-Reliance Highway." In our dreams, it cuts through northern Illinois, and on westward to the Pacific, to the Apple Country around Spokane.

Johnny Appleseed's apple trees marched straight west, past his grave at Fort Wayne, Indiana, through the best apple country of Illinois, to the Pacific, and stand there singing Whitman's "Passage to India."

There is another highway that is also a highway of dreams. The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says that this also illustrates the disposition of the whole world from of old to walk westward on parallels of latitude after sailing westward on parallels of latitude. There may be found many motor roads now, snappy with filling stations, motor roads which follow a similar track. The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says it might

be called "The Elizabethan Highway," or "The Pocahontas Highway," or "The Daniel Boone Trail," according to your taste.

He shows it to me in a vision from his "Flying Book of Sangamon County." It is that road that led the younger sons of the more adventurous tidewater Virginians, disqualified by the law of primogeniture, first into west Tennessee, then led them possibly through Cumberland Gap into Kentucky, then into southernmost Indiana, then into southern Illinois.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says that no matter how often you have studied geography, you will imagine that the Ohio River runs straight east and west. On the contrary, the southern tip of Indiana is farther south than that of Ohio; the tip of Illinois farther south than that of Indiana.

The Lincoln family, moving westward through the generations, and Abraham going on to New Salem, Illinois, were all part of the west-going Virginia stream which only mingled with the Johnny Appleseed contingent (as one might call them), after they reached Illinois and built a capital at Springfield. Lincoln was always a peculiar mixture of the high bookish idealism of the outdoor sort, which made Thoreau and Johnny Appleseed, and the lazy long-legged ways of the Southern pioneer.

I, the author of this article, add that Lincoln is finally, to me, a typical Virginia man; but that is a view I developed in my home town of Springfield, Illinois. It is, of course, a special prejudice of my own, and indicates I have no New England blood in my veins.

But The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler interrupts me again to say that it was the Civil War which hurled Illinois into

unity, which centered it around Lincoln; and it was the first state in the history of the early Republic to embrace within its four walls all previous types of citizenship and pioneer, each according to climate, zone and soil; to embrace in itself a convention of the younger sons of the original thirteen states.

Springfield, my home-town, is still described to me to my face by those who do not care for it, as a "little, lazy, slatternly, sprawling, southern town." Well, then, it is not ruined completely by "Main Street" and "Babbitt" ways of living.

For better and for worse, it *is* a Southern town, administering the affairs of roaring Chicago under the dome of the Illinois Capitol building; and how it galls the kibe of the smaller politicians of that great Polish and Balkan metropolis, Chicago, when they have to cut across many invisible parallels, no less real because invisible, and come south to Springfield, down to sleepy Springfield to waste four to forty hours of "valuable" time putting something through the State Senate, the House, and the Executive Department.

Why can't it all be settled in the Chicago City Hall? Why trifle with this burg on the edge of the meditative Sangamon?

I, the author of this article, interrupt The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler to say that I think the fact that Springfield is a Southern town, somewhat oldish in its ways, will be in the end its salvation, and the salvation supreme of Chicago and of Illinois; for no dreams are ever dreamed in haste; and no visions come over the radio or by telegraph wire. And we are leading toward a vision called "Lincoln In India."

But The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler will not tell it right away. He must be matter of fact awhile, and says that Springfield, Illinois, already has its own city flag, endorsed by all the office-holding bigwigs of the state, and praised by every faction at the time of its adoption, however it be left dusty and unwaved, at times. This flag has a special symbolism of its own, carefully worked out; and rich examples of it are on display in such places as the Lincoln Library of Springfield. Soon tiny replicas will be in the hands of every child there. Surely, if any city in the world is entitled to its own flag, to be carried in countless processions, it is The Pilgrim City, Springfield.

When that Ancient Mariner-Fiddler "Springfield Incarnate," holds me with his glittering eye, with this flag waving over his head on some high building, or with many flags of Springfield uplifted, in billowy glitterings, uplifted by troops of children round him, what does he tell of our Pilgrim City of the future?

In some ways he agrees with Ralph Adams Cram, as to what should be the typical future American City, and therefore will be; he pictures a walled town with a gigantic cathedral, a city that will seem to some medieval.

And, I add, why not? The most integrated cities that come to mind are the independent towns of the medieval time, like Nuremburg: Cities which were nations within nations, and in which citizenship was indicated by a flag and badge and costume, representing a special honor and protection. Since Nuremburg still stands intact, it is a good place for me to cite to all the school teachers reading this article. Go to Nuremburg next summer, on your savings:

Springfield will be something like that some day! When I walked the streets of Nuremburg long ago, by Dürer's house, or the bronzes of Peter Vischer, I said, "Springfield will be like this some day!" And the Ancient Mariner-Fiddler tells me to say to you that when you take your world tour and go to any pilgrim cities of the wide stretches of Asia, or to Turkistan, or Samarkand, or to the walled towns of North India, bring back items for your walled town of the future, your pilgrim city of Springfield, and then, when you pass through Springfield, call at the city hall and tell the mayor of Springfield exactly what you want; do not let him escape till he consents.

And I interrupt to say it is your city, *not* the mayor's,—and that Springfield is a national Federal dream, the property of your children's children as much as the District of Columbia or Washington, D. C.; that it should be set apart in the same way, as holy ground, clean of local hog-wallow politics; and you, dear friend, from one of the other forty-seven states of the Union, as pilgrim to your own shrine, have a right to make your imperious voice heard.

Yea, it will result in the end in making this The Pilgrim City, indeed, with pilgrims from Africa, China, Japan, and India, with increasing numbers, and in increasing reverence.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler has given me a vision of the north and south streams of pilgrimage which made Illinois, and therefore, Springfield; the "Johnny Appleseed Highway" from Massachusetts;; the "Elizabethan," "Pocahontas," or "Daniel Boone Highway" from Virginia; and we have spoken of the pilgrims of today.

But now many days pass. I sit, revising and finishing this

article. I look on the wall and I see a robe from Asia, black silk with two dragons fighting, made of cloth of gold. By its very design it brings me nearer the Pacific. I understand better how Asia is soon to invade the whole world by peace or war, and the whole world is to invade Asia by peace or war—dreams are to cross and re-cross the Pacific at last, instead of pushing westward through Europe.

So our tiny pilgrim city of Springfield, Illinois, will in the end be in many ways formed by terribly serious pilgrims from Asia, with dragon banners and dragon fire flying above their heads, pilgrims landing from their flying machines, welcomed as Lindbergh was in Paris, doing honor to the Springfield Flag. It is inevitable that this should be so.

Right by the tomb of General Grant, New York City, there is a tablet, with a high honorific inscription, left by Chinese pilgrims; but by the tomb of Lincoln, and in the city of Lincoln, many tablets will be set up by these pilgrims in flying machines, who have been deeply moved by the story of the man born in the log cabin, who became the symbol of equality for all the world; the man who set his nation free, and sang that song called "The Gettysburg Address."

Flying across the Pacific is going to be as routine as our local air-mail service is today, and of these Pacific flyers, more and more will be pilgrims, indeed; fantastic, phantasmagoric indeed, but noble and wonderful.

And The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says that it is a story almost too familiar to be told, that the picture of Lincoln is a kind of ikon in the Russian peasant's hut; and is now

invading the homes of the Chinese poor on almost the same terms.

And The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler asks, "Do you think that these pictures can be scattered all over the world for so long without pilgrims coming to seek the place whence the pictures came, bringing their own construction and their own new inspiration and teaching, based on Abraham Lincoln's life?" *The world has flying men, and will soon have thousands of flying books of liberty.*

No revolution or re-writing of history can stop this dream-conquest by Lincoln, the conquering dreamer, the high liberator of the souls of men.

Some day I want to draw a book of tiny pen and ink cartoons of the dreams The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler brings me, his glimpses of "The Flying Book of the Sangamon County and Springfield of the Future, With its Leaves and Wings of Gold": maps and diagrams, and towering architectural plans of what Sangamon County and Springfield, the magnificent, may be: Springfield, The International Pilgrim City of the year 2000.

The more Asia influences our city, the more pictorial it will be; it will be a place not merely of dragon-like buildings, with dragon wings above it, but serenely transformed, as when the Greeks who had left Constantinople settled and transformed Venice. Then it was that Venice was rebuilt into the eternal synonym for serene splendor. So the giant dragon wings will shed down a strange incense.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler keeps warning me that it will not all be Asia, that the New England stream of American pilgrims coming into this city still, will sharpen up the

leadership of men of the type of the three Emersonians:—Walt Whitman, Thoreau, and Johnny Appleseed.

These three men represent that type of clean-cut aggression in town-meeting democracy which is the first and last thing in New England. So, in our Springfield of the future, under pavilions and arches however oriental, and wings however glittering, will pass men of this relentless type in all the arts.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says that if you took a poll of the missionary societies of all the denominations even in the most moderate-sized towns, you would be astonished at the number of native sons who have gone to India, China, Japan, or other parts of Asia, and returned, many times, on furlough.

These people are not advertised, for no one has an objective in advertising them; but every pastor can tell you of one or two in the history of his congregation.

I venture to interrupt him to say it so happened that our home in Springfield was a rendezvous for such people; my father and mother took persistent interest in what they had to say of all the kingdoms of Asia; our home was filled with the glittering loot they left with us, when they returned to Asia.

Later in our small family chronicle, my sister and brother-in-law went as missionaries to China; and later my father and mother visited China and Japan, going to see not only these, their own, but others who had passed through our house from childhood.

And our missionaries and pilgrims brought back trunks full and brains full of glittering things.

So I cannot help being exceedingly conscious of the link between Springfield, Illinois, and all Asia, of which the Ancient Mariner-Fiddler makes music to me.

I am sure Springfield will be the creator of new religious international dreams for these hundred years; and returning missionaries will have their hand in the matter, and, going back to Asia, will preach from the story of Lincoln once more.

The best thing any missionary from Springfield has to say, in Asia, to my profane way of thinking, is that he comes from the home town of Lincoln, the emancipator of men.

Our heady doctrines are just beginning to be felt all over China, fermenting in the minds of many factions in many ways; and the Ancient Mariner-Fiddler reiterates that you may be sure that the picture of Abraham Lincoln hangs on the walls of all the really zealous of all factions.

Let us step more intimately with that Ancient Mariner-Fiddler, the Old Fiddling Middle West incarnate, there on the edge of a sea of Indian corn, reading us stories of the future of Springfield, and of the children of Springfield round him, waving their great Springfield flags. He is eternally talking about the generation born in the year 2000; and the new national dreams that will be created then. All his sermons and stories indicate that men will still be marching daily to a tune he now fiddles for me, "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more." He tells me again in his fantastic way, that his tales are read and his music is played from a book that he sees, but which I cannot always see, "The Flying Book of Sangamon County and Springfield, With Wings and Leaves of Gold."

This he reiterates is a book from which many nations will read, a book which will begin to appear in the year 2000, with world-sweeping power.

Sometimes I think it is his quaint way of saying that Springfield will be increasingly the creator of new national and international dreams.

One of the morals of "The Flying Book," which many of its tales will point, is that all men are created equal in the right to life, liberty, and the grand manner.

The Ancient Mariner-Fiddler reiterates that Thomas Jefferson, the Virginian, taught him to fiddle, and gave him his violin, and taught him that the world for a long time confused the grand style and the caste system, and that Jefferson and Lincoln came to prove that the grand style had nothing to do with the caste system. And he says that Lincoln came to prove that a soul can be magnificent, and prophetic, and democratic, and world-sweeping, and yet be born in the dust.

And now, I, the author of this article, interrupt to say it is astounding what a stumbling block the life of Lincoln is for all those who would be special apologists for the caste system. I remember particularly one very distinguished Hindu who argued well, but in a voice that grew more and more squeaky as his monologue of the afternoon proceeded, that Lincoln himself was a vindication of the caste system of India, because "he was a natural-born Brahman." This dark-skinned oracle was himself so much of a "natural-born Brahman" that I did not get in a word edgewise all that afternoon. I now tell him in print, years afterwards, since I have at last my opportunity, that Lincoln is obviously the

greatest stumbling block to the whole theory of caste, and I recommend to him Carl Sandburg's book on Lincoln, "The Prairie Years."

This brings me to one of the stories told by that Ancient Mariner-Fiddler, as he holds me with his glittering eye.

He says, "I am in the year 2000 A. D. I turn another leaf of 'The Flying Book of Sangamon County and Springfield, With Wings and Leaves of Gold.' I see on the top lines of the new page that many people who used to live in Springfield are returning. Lincoln's law partners, Stuart, Logan, Herndon, return. Judge David Davis, the old War Governor Yates, return. Characters of war days who lived in other parts of the land are coming up from the very stones of the street: Julia Ward Howe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, John Brown, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Alexander H. Stephens, Horace Greeley, Jeb Stuart, Morgan the Raider, and many others from the South and North come up from the ground, many of them wearing new names and disguised as new citizens. These are really ghosts of the past, laboring for Springfield, The Pilgrim City, the creator of new International and National dreams."

There are many of the rest of us who return, some in the old guise, some in an utterly new one.

And I, the writer of this article, see walking there the very reincarnations of my own kin. But the Ancient Mariner-Fiddler says: "What do I read on the next page of 'The Flying Book of Sangamon County and Springfield, With Wings and Leaves of Gold,' as to the soul of Abraham Lincoln, the dream leader of us all? He has gone, for his

dream's sake, around the world; he is standing this hour on the banks of the Ganges at Benares.

"The story is going about that they intend to make him a great priest or chieftain of India. We are at a great bend in the river where the steps for the holy bathers in the stream make an amphitheatre, a coliseum. And behind the innumerable steps, behind the highest tiers, rise temples of all the sects of the whole world. Lincoln stands high in the center of an assembly, with his old umbrella and his battered silk hat. He wears the same old flapping duster, at his feet is the old valise. He is surrounded completely by a ring of Brahmans and scholars and the rich from all the world who consider themselves Brahmans—and with them, squeezed among them, their pet genealogizers, chronologers, biographers. They keep chanting with Brahman calm, 'He is a Brahman, he is one of us!'

"Then comes the ring of Kshatiyas, the warriors, demanding entrance into the inner ring, clashing their hissing swords and saying, 'He is a warrior; he is one of us! He is not a Brahman, not a priest! He is descended from Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, Kublai Khan, the Grand Moguls!'

"Then comes a ring of the next caste, the Vaisyas, the merchants and husbandmen, saying, 'He was a merchant at New Salem, and a rail-splitter and plowboy in his youth; he is a Vaisya. He is not a Brahman, nor a Kshatiya, he is one of us!' This ring is larger; there are more of these people, for they do the work for the inner rings.

"Outside of all these, is a ring of the lowest caste of all, craning their necks to see the tall Lincoln and his queer regalia. This is a ring of the Sudras, of the mechanics and

laborers, in the meanest occupations of all that are still tolerated, and these say: 'By his own words, his annals are the short and simple annals of the poor; he is not a Brahman, a Kshatiya, or a Vaisya. He always said he was a Sudra; he always said he was one of us.'

"But what is this throng crowding the Ganges, stepping into the water, or at the very top of the amphitheatre of shore-steps, or on the peaks of the highest semicircle of buildings, with uplifted arms, frantic, rebellious against the only caste system still on earth, craning their necks to look at the tall Lincoln?

"These are the scavengers, the Pariahs, the outcasts, the men from the dust of the dust, the servants of the lowest. Their manner lacks repose; those on the steps of the far temples are throwing dust and straw on their heads; tearing their garments; shouting to drown out all others.

"There will be a wild religious battle on the banks of the Ganges, as there has been many a time before.

"But suddenly there is a path made; up from the waters of the Ganges like an apparition, up the stone steps of the bank, with a shaky tread, comes a woman, worn and bowed. They must all make way for her. There must be silence. Lincoln takes off his hat and bows his head, and waits for her.

"She comes to her son and says to them all, 'I am his mother. . . . I was born in the dust. . . . I am his mother. . . . He was born, with tears, in the dust.' And the circles completely change, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and the Brahmans take the place of the Pariahs, and the Pariahs take the place of the Brahmans, and the

The Great Minaret at Delhi

weak things of the world are chosen to confound the mighty.

"One who is full of grace, remembering a dusty stable in Bethlehem and her Child in the straw, drops a rose leaf for Nancy Hanks from the glittering uttermost heavens, saying, in a whisper like one ray of a day-star, 'She was his mother. He was born in the dust.'"

This is the first of the thousand and one stories told to me by The Ancient Mariner, Springfield, Illinois, as he looks into "The Flying Book of Sangamon County and Springfield, with Wings and Leaves of Gold," and plays fantastically upon Thomas Jefferson's old Virginia violin from its pages, as though music even older than Virginia were in notation there.

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN, ADVENTURER, REMEMBERING HIS YOUTH IN THE SOUTH

O magnet-South! O glistening, perfumed South! My South!
O quick mettle, rich blood, impulse, and love! Good and evil!
O all dear to me!
O dear to me my birth-things—All moving things, and the trees where I was born—the grains, plants, rivers;

Dear to me my own slow sluggish rivers where they flow, distant, over flats of silvery sands, or through swamps;
Dear to me the Roanoke, the Savannah, the Altamahaw, the Pedee, the Tombigbee, the Santee, the Coosa, and the Sabine;
O pensive, far away wandering, I return with my Soul to haunt their banks again;

Again in Florida I float on transparent lakes—I float on the Okeechobee—I cross the hummock land, or through pleasant openings, or dense forests;

I see the parrots in the woods—I see the pawpaw tree and the blossoming titi;

Again, sailing in my coaster, on deck, I coast off Georgia—I coast up the Carolinas,

I see where the live-oak is growing—I see where the yellow pine, the scented bay-tree, the lemon and orange, the cypress, the graceful palmetto;

I pass rude sea-headlands and enter Pamlico Sound through an inlet, and dart my vision inland;

O the cotton plant! the growing fields of rice, sugar, hemp!

The cactus, guarded with thorns—the laurel-tree, with large white flowers;

The range afar—the richness and barrenness—the old woods charged with mistletoe and trailing moss,

The piney odor and the gloom—the awful natural stillness, (Here in these dense swamps the freebooter carries his gun, and the fugitive slave has his conceal'd hut;)

O the strange fascination of these half-known, half-impassable swamps, infested by reptiles, resounding with the bellow of the alligator, the sad noises of the night-owl and the wild-cat, and the whirr of the rattlesnake;

The mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing all the forenoon—singing through the moon-lit night,

The humming-bird, the wild turkey, the raccoon, the opossum;

A Tennessee corn-field—the tall, graceful, long-leav'd corn—slender, flapping, bright green with tassels—with beautiful ears, each well-sheath'd in its husk;

An Arkansas prairie—a sleeping lake, or still bayou;

O my heart! O tender and fierce pangs—I can stand them not—I will depart;

O to be a Virginian, where I grew up! O to be a Carolinian!

O longings irrepressible! O I will go back to old Tennessee, and never wander more!

QUOTATIONS FROM WALT WHITMAN, THE ORTHODOX MILLENNIAL JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRAT

I swear I begin to see the meaning of these things,
It is not the earth, it is not America, who is great,
It is I who am great or to be great, it is You up there, or any one,
It is to walk rapidly through civilizations, governments, theories,
Through poems, pageants, shows, to form individuals.
Underneath all, individuals,
I swear nothing is good to me now that ignores individuals,
The American compact is altogether with individuals,
The only government is that which makes minute of individuals,
The whole theory of the universe is directed unerringly to one single individual—namely to You.
(Mother! with subtle sense severe, with the naked sword in your hand,
I saw you at last refuse to treat but directly with individuals.)

. . . . . .

To The States, or any one of them, or any city of The States, *Resist much, obey little;*
Once unquestioning obedience, once fully enslaved;
Once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city, of this earth, ever afterward resumes its liberty.

. . . . . .

Delicate cluster! flag of teeming life!
Covering all my lands! all my sea-shores lining!
Flag of death! (how I watch'd you through the smoke of battle pressing!
How I heard you flap and rustle, cloth defiant!)
Flag cerulean! sunny flag! with the orbs of night dappled!

THE LITANY OF WASHINGTON STREET

Ah my silvery beauty! ah my woolly white and crimson!
Ah to sing the song of you, my matron mighty!
My sacred one, my mother.

. . . . . .

I announce natural persons to arise;
I announce justice triumphant;
I announce uncompromising liberty and equality;
I announce the justification of candor, and the justification of pride.

. . . . . .

I believe of all those billions of men and women that fill'd the unnamed lands, every one exists this hour, here or elsewhere, invisible to us, in exact proportion to what he or she grew from in life, and out of what he or she did, felt, became, loved, sinn'd, in life.

I believe that was not the end of those nations, or any person of them, any more than this shall be the end of my nation, or of me;
Of their languages, governments, marriage, literature, products, games, wars, manners, crimes, prisons, slaves, heroes, poets, I suspect their results curiously await in the yet unseen world—counterparts of what accrued to them in the seen world.
I suspect I shall meet them there,
I suspect I shall there find each old particular of those unnamed lands.

. . . . . .

Monticello

THE LITANY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON'S VIOLIN, A RECAPITULATION

(This is a litany, presumed to be chanted on the steps of the Capitol at Washington by some United States Troubadour.)

Some people think they are clever when they have brought about a 99-year lease. Thomas Jefferson has taken a thousand-year lease on U. S. A. thought, and then perhaps he will come into full possession. The first thing to be noticed in an election campaign is the number of quotations from Jefferson used by the leaders of both parties to fortify whatever position they may take. It is my conviction that the worthwhile leadership in any party now in existence or being planned for the future, quotes Jefferson with all sincerity; and also that there are many men who have not gone into Jefferson's own writings very carefully who are rank Jeffersonians.

As George Washington grew old, there hardened around him the Federalist Party under the leadership of John Adams and Alexander Hamilton, to my belief claiming more of Washington's support than was actually theirs. This party

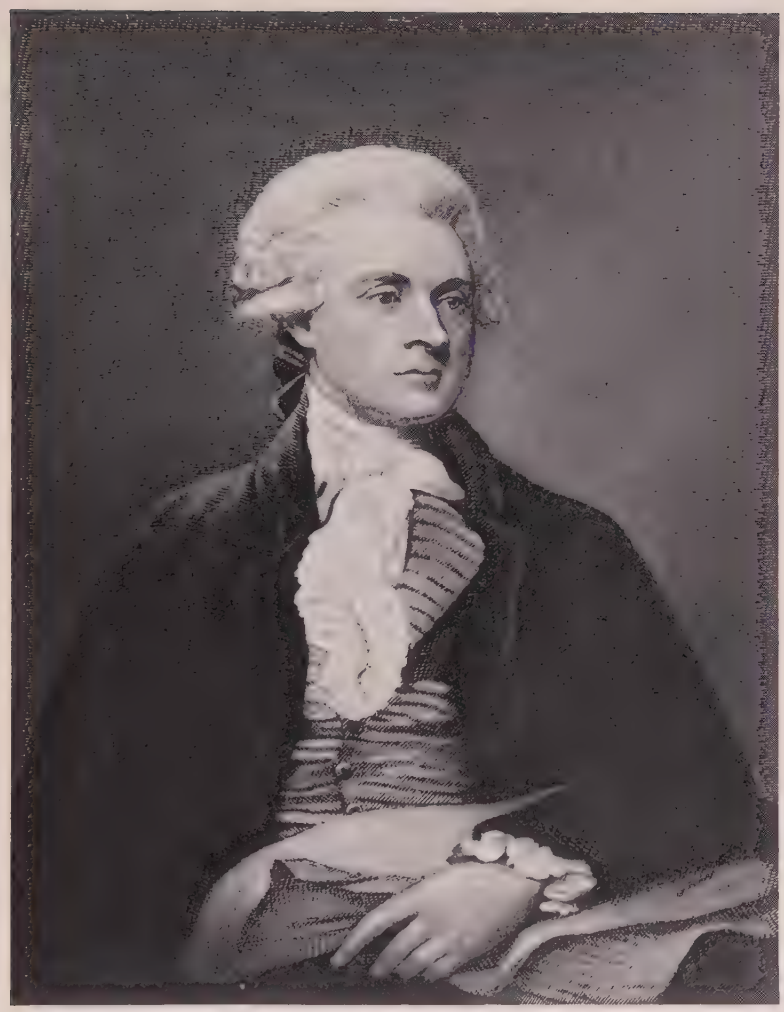
was destroyed by Jefferson's eight years of presidency. When Jackson came into power, he represented an effort to overthrow those who were doing a lip-service to Jefferson, who did not understand his ideals. When Lincoln built up toward the presidency with speech and debate in the years immediately preceding the Civil War, he based much of his argument on Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia." And the Gettysburg Oration, Lincoln's most famous piece of writing, is entirely Jeffersonian, beginning as it does: "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great Civil War testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war."

Let us try the reverse of these phrases. "Our fathers brought forth upon this continent an old nation, conceived in tyranny, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created unequal. Now we are engaged in a great Civil War testing whether that nation or any nation so misconceived and so misdedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war."

The great battlefield of this war goes on for a thousand years, though the fighting is seldom with guns. We all should pamphleteer, and draw pictures and decorations and cartoons on the subject. Both old parties, and all new parties are, or will be, committed to the Jeffersonian propositions; and the question will always be whether they mean what they say. To take the most exact opposite: India, as far as man has remembered, has been committed to the caste

system, and almost any Hindu man or woman will die to maintain it. I am now through with what some people would call a political speech. By Thomas Jefferson's thousand years, I mean that we cannot get rid of his ideas for a thousand years; and we will be fighting over them for better or worse, for that time, and giving them every kind of artistic, literary, religious and political expression. The nearer we are to the precise Jefferson, the nearer we are to exactitude in United States citizenship.

What is back of these ideas that are watered out by weak politicians at every election till they have to be renewed by someone who has really read Jefferson? We want pictures of the real past; we do not want generalities. The first picture is of Thomas Jefferson's father, a man of the Daniel Boone type, dressed in the same fashion, way out on the Virginia frontier, surveying lands for the Randolph family, doing it well, winning their respect and allegiance, and incidentally, picking up a deal of land for himself, in a real-estate career almost parallel to that of young George Washington, who later surveyed lands for the Fairfax family. To be a surveyor was to be a natural chieftain among the backwoodsmen, however democratic the conditions; and land was almost as free as water, if one could only draw a line around it. But the difference between Jefferson's father and some other adventurous young Virginians on this frontier was a tremendous love for the life; a deeper conviction that the type of equality which frontier life enforced between white man and white man was the natural life of a man. And Jefferson's father had something that was probably not a conviction, but a deep instinct: the disposition to make a



Th. Jefferson.

Red Indian of himself. This has often taken hold of young white men on the frontier, and has left its eternal mark on the United States nervous system. George Washington was rewarded for his career as an Indian fighter and surveyor by good will from the tremendous Fairfaxes of the tidewater. Jefferson's father was rewarded by being presented with one of the Randolph young ladies for a wife. People who have the lavender and old-lace state of mind discuss Thomas Jefferson as the red-headed son of a Randolph, with a few peculiar French notions which he outgrew when he made the Louisiana Purchase and became imperial. People who see him as the son of the self-made Peter Jefferson look upon him as from the beginning, the perfect natural democrat. But let us be fair, and thank both the Randolphs and the Jeffersons for Thomas Jefferson; allow his traits of character to fight their own battles in his books and collected letters (they need no help of ours); and look at a few more Jeffersonian pictures.

Jefferson as a student at William and Mary is an interesting creature, all hands and feet as George Washington was at the same age; but as much interested in professors and their books as Washington was in horses, foxes, and farms. I like to imagine Thomas Jefferson at the old Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg when there are not enough guests to be worried by him, when his books are not on his mind, actually finding time to play his violin alone by the fire. Now there you have Thomas. Some passionate Jeffersonians have conceded that he could not play very well. But it does me a lot of good to realize that he was red-headed and that he played anyway. He certainly had self-knowledge,

for one does not hear of great occasions which he ruined with this violin. But the spiritual brother of Daniel Boone playing a violin by a lone tavern fire is one real picture of young Thomas Jefferson.

They say Jefferson was a wary lover. He got along with the girls at the start better than Washington, and did not have to fight Indians to get over his terrible setbacks. But he loved his dear Belinda, and maybe she loved him in the same cool way; and this coolness and this ability to get by at a ball without being a nervous wreck, he probably owed to the consciousness that, after all, his mamma was a Randolph, if he did have big feet and red hair.

Pardon me, Daughters of the Revolution, if I suggest that your heroes were not always beautiful. Jefferson was indeed a gawk at first. Isn't it true that men who have made perfectly elegant presidents at middle age were often such youths, even at twenty-five years of age? They grow slowly, these giants, and sometimes their magnificent personal style is the last thing they acquire.

In our early days we see Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams doing what they could for us in Europe, as Fathers of the Republic; and we see Jefferson a French Revolutionary, when the Revolution had the Lafayette flavor. The way he fitted into the Lafayette mood of the early fathers of the French Revolution was probably owing as much to the good manners of his Randolph mamma as to the courage, brains, and practical democracy of his Jefferson papa.

Surely if he had not been a Randolph it would not have been so easy to have made him Secretary of State in George Washington's first administration. And in his eternal duel

with Hamilton, then begun, which will go on for a thousand years, his father furnishes the strength and the brains; his mother, the limberness.

Now for the next Jeffersonian picture we will wait till the great man is dead and look at his tombstone. On it, at his own request, he is praised for three things only: The statute for religious freedom for Virginia; the Declaration of Independence; and the founding of the University of Virginia. The most romantic thing in the biography of Edgar Poe is his attending this university founded by Jefferson. It had an influence upon the imagination of Poe seldom celebrated by the Russians or the French or the Polynesians who praise Poe with such passion.

Because Thomas Jefferson was a Jefferson, he was a craftsman and an artist; because he was a Randolph, he was a versatile artist; and the list of the contrasting things he did superbly well would shame a Florentine of the Renaissance. We can kid his violining, but that is about all. Surely it was a symbol of his meditative, sagelike, creative mind. He was a better architect than a violinist. With the help of his daughter, he drew the plans for the buildings of the University of Virginia, and there they stand today, as original and beautiful as the poems of Poe, reminding one of Poe's serenest lines. *Since they came first, it is proper to assume that Jefferson's architectural genius became a part of Poe's visualizing power.* Just as Poe mixed the classic and the wildly unknown and original, to achieve a new order, so did Jefferson in the drawing of these buildings and in this landscape gardening.

When I was about thirty-five years old, I was called from

the West to speak at the University of Virginia. I found myself altogether astonished at the parallel I then discovered between Poe and Jefferson in the serener moods of both. This is a deeper matter than I can dwell upon in a general article; but it is indeed fitting that the bust of Poe by Zolnay should be in the rotunda of the library of the University of Virginia. The wandering walls that enclose the yards of the school, lost in extraordinary shrubberies, have the effect of a Poe incantation; and the high porches of the buildings are as classic as Poe's bust of Pallas, and the oldest statues and columns of the university speak of "The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome." One of the most interesting things about the place is that while it seems still in some wilderness which Jefferson's father explored, it is surrounded by more good bronzes and marbles in various gaps in the shrubbery than any other school I have ever seen, or than any other single spot of outdoors on United States soil that I know about. Here again you have the Randolph and the Jefferson happily married, a thing to meditate upon.

The next question is—who reigns within the walls of this university—Peter Jefferson or the Randolph maiden? Certainly it was Jefferson's hope that his father should prevail there. People were to come and learn if they pleased; and the usual academic routine was to be utterly disregarded. Poe was by all means his most successful student, from this standpoint, for Poe came nearer doing as he pleased, or as his dæmon pleased, than any Virginian except Jefferson himself. Judging by human nature and events, however, without pretending to any confidences from the faculty of

the University of Virginia, I fancy that the school is a little more academic at this hour than the founder hoped for. But Jefferson has a thousand years to wait; and his books cannot all be burned.

As we have declared, Jefferson's violin was a symbol of his meditative, creative mind. Poe said that:

> "Israfeli's fire
> Was owing to that lyre,
> By which he sits and sings,
> The trembling living wire
> Of those unusual strings."

Now Brother Poe did not think himself a leveler or a democrat, though he owes one of his greatest debts to Thomas Jefferson's violin. As far as Poe had any thoughts about his dramatic status in this world, he probably saw himself as a raging, dashing, Southern fire-eating cavalier with gauntlet, bonnet and plume. Very recently I heard him denounced as a charlatan by a high Massachusetts authority; and I suppose that this is what was meant. But the mind of Poe in the arts is as world-pervasive as the mind of Jefferson in politics, and affects the *same* people. There is the Jefferson in Poe's clarity and the Randolph in his style.

There is a new school of quite lively biographers of the Fathers of our Republic, which is most useful and edifying. They are as valuable as the President of the Sewing Society when she gets the low-down on the preacher, and tells the congregation one at a time for their own good; of course, wishing the preacher well. They are as edifying as the deacon, who, having been labored with by his wife, ultimately makes the implacably just Sewing Society conclusions

official. Yes, gentlemen, we want the truth about all the Fathers of the Republic. But when you attempt a Sewing Society attitude toward the father of your country, or the father of the Democratic Party, you are attempting the impossible. You are not dealing with short-legged Massachusetts men afoot, but with long-legged Virginians on horseback. You may rage and roar; but you cannot destroy the gauntlet, the bonnet, and the plume. These are part of Thomas Jefferson's thousand years.

It is to be freely admitted that when Thomas Jefferson went into power he attempted what was then called republican austerity. He left off a few ostrich feathers. But if the sonorous passages of the Declaration of Independence and the magnificent decorative style of the University of Virginia architecture mark republican austerity they are also Virginian of the Old School. There is the same long-bow curve, the same rainbow sweep in the gesture of Washington and of Jefferson, whatever their ultimate difference of opinion in party government. The essential dignity of a Red Indian chief has nothing to do with Brahman or Bourbon ideas. A man may be tall as a redwood, yet believe in a Declaration of Independence. Grace is the privilege of the fern and oak, and of the pillar of fire.

There are two styles: the petty and the grand. The petty style has nothing to do with aristocracy or democracy, or with mere size. A hog may have it, a gnat may have it, a

hippopotamus may have it, a monkey may have it, a gorilla may have it. The grand style has nothing to do with aristocracy or democracy, or with mere size. A sea gull may have it, a dragon fly may have it, a flying fish may have it, a bison may have it, a sunrise may have it. We are approaching the United States sunrise of the grand style. Till I am squelched, I volunteer to try to express a few of the general ideas of the United States people on this subject, and let the historians and specialists catch me up if they can.

Splendor is not synonymous with tyranny. Decoration may appear on the gipsy's bonnet or on the pheasant s wing. At present, the flapper is the only everyday citizen on our soil who has the privilege of dressing the part. But the flapper rebellion so lately achieved may yet break out in costumes for men; and before the end of Thomas Jefferson's thousand years men may have the privilege of the splendors of the old Indian chieftains, or of Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton on horseback.

There was a sharp difference of opinion between Jefferson and Washington as to party government. Jefferson believed in the two-party system which we have had ever since. Washington believed that the nation should be governed as our best commission cities have lately been governed, by a non-partisan commission. This is not a political article, and I do not think that I am smart enough to write one. But the rivalry of Washington and Jefferson is a rivalry which both dramatized better than they knew. Washington was wisdom itself in keeping Jefferson in his cabinet as long as possible. Jefferson was right in seeing that the Constitution demanded perpetual George Washingtons in the chair;

and since there never was but one, and there never will be but one, I hold that Jefferson was a statesman in thrusting party government upon this country again, at the end of Washington's eight years. It was a return to the old Anglo-Saxon precedent, not necessarily a barn-burning idea. There is no doubt that Jefferson made what seems now an unnecessary clatter about the Virginia pomps of Washington; especially those of Martha Washington. He seemed to accuse them of hinting at a kingdom in all but name. This bonnet and plume idea can run away with people sometimes; though there is not the remotest sign that it has ever disturbed us since the great General was laid in his tomb. He was our first and last king, and let us face that. But he was a king more like an Indian chief than a European king. Jefferson was more like a free young Indian than a European, though he never knew it.

He may have piled up all sorts of letters about liberty and equality, in the French manner; but the real liberty that was in his blood and bones, was that of his father sitting cross-legged at some Indian chief's camp fire, with his surveyor's instruments piled beside him, and the chief offering the feast of brotherhood there in the roaring woods. It is from interviews such as these that we have a birthright to Jeffersonian equality and to the Virginia bonnet and plume.

The book of Field Service Regulations of the U. S. Army is based on Indian warfare. The Civil War, North and South, was fought with Red Indian tactics; these things are fairly clear to any man in haste. But we shall not begin to understand the Fathers of our Republic until we admit that they were as much influenced by the Indian in peace as

in war. And if Washington was educated by the Indian scalping knife and tomahawk on the frontier, Jefferson was educated by the peace pipe. Both men piled up words in the European manner to disguise their education. I, being of the great new school of realistic historians, am reducing this matter to the facts, to the very blood, bones, and hair of the situation.

There is another Jeffersonian picture: the "Sage of Monticello" at home, and a great host. We will set aside the word "Sage," and let someone else explain it. It was a mannerism of that time. But look at the man Jefferson, never busy and never idle, and as ingenious as Thomas Edison. His ingenuities are social rather than scientific. That is, he draws architectural plans; he invents a desk; he works out a curious dumb-waiter system; he evolves our coinage, which is all right now, of course, because we have it, though he proposed a thousand other ingenious schemes which are not all right because we don't have them yet, nevertheless matter-of-fact as our coinage.

When he is in Europe, he collects like a botanist, a zoologist, and geologist; when he is President, through his influence, Lewis and Clark do the same in our Far West. It was his own private library, the most distinguished in America, which had enough old maps of all sorts and kinds to determine *what* the Louisiana Purchase *was*. And if it had not been for those maps and Jefferson's scholarly compilation of the same, we might not know what his Louisiana Purchase was, even yet. Aside from being a very big man, he was the busiest little bee not to buzz, that can possibly be imagined. It ought to be a satisfaction, a common bond

with most of the readers of this article, to know that neither he nor George Washington could make a speech. Washington retired into a magnificent Gilbert Stuart silence; and Jefferson took his pen in hand. The general dexterity of which I have spoken, which is really the theme of this paragraph, was probably owing to the Randolph blood. It worked out, with the dignity and intricacy of a Japanese museum, rather than with the tricks of the patent office. One side of Jefferson's doctrines might be stated this way: "All men are ingenious when they have a chance, because I am." Another: "All men are magnificently versatile when they have a chance, because I am."

If we get tired of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," we might translate a tiny aspect of this phrase into Jeffersonian versatility. The United States has just begun to live up to this versatility. Once we almost invented ourselves into fits. But that was in the blacksmith's shop and patent office. Now every sport shop has a new trick way of doing something or other. So has every filling-station and every John Dewey school. And behold the new Ford automobile. We are now applying to skyscrapers, landscape gardening, coast-to-coast highways, and things more and more bordering on the social rather than the scientific life, the genius of Jefferson, not that of Edison. We are just beginning to graduate into the former's mellow type of Virginia versatility. We are becoming Randolphs.

When Jefferson was a host at Monticello, every known variety of human being who had anything whatever to contribute to experience was welcome, and was a source of courage to this eternal fighter for democracy. He is described

over and over as the perfect host. When he was flattered into ordering a bust of himself, he ordered one in the same fashion of his political enemy, Alexander Hamilton; and they faced one another in the great room. Moreover, Jefferson always spoke in terms of admiration for his most implacable foe. He could be thus self-possessed because the issues of Jeffersonism are not settled on election day. They are social, and are settled on all other days, an inch at a time.

Another picture of Thomas Jefferson is as a man of eighty-three, lonely in Monticello, his work all behind him or a thousand years ahead, writing to his Federalist foe, John Adams, ninety-one, his work all done, or a thousand years ahead. Jefferson is the only man who has founded an intellectual dynasty in America, Adams the only man who has founded a family. Jefferson opens the correspondence with none of these thoughts in mind; Adams responds with equal innocence and with ardent friendship after lifetime battle; and it is about as salty a correspondence as one would wish to dip into.

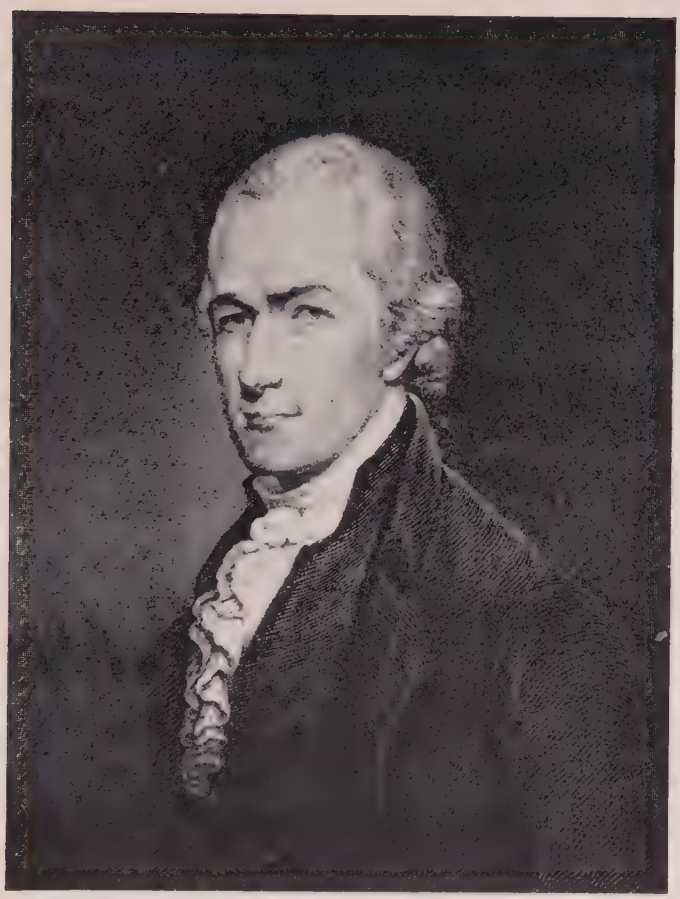
Here is this John Adams who was so vain, who was so chagrined over Jefferson's beating him in the presidential election, that he rode out of town without waiting for the inaugural ceremony, now writing to one who still represents an alien mind. Both of them realize by this time how much the wind and the tides, the sun, the stars, the air, and the four seasons count in human life, and both are willing to let old age speak to old age. Adams is ardent, voluble, writes many letters to Jefferson's one. Jefferson is still the tactician, and avoids points of controversy in conversation.

His style is a miracle of violin music in its slightest note; and so to the end of the drama. The two old men die on the same day, the fourth of July and are later eulogized by Daniel Webster in his "Adams and Jefferson Oration," given in the presence of Continental Soldiers as old as the G. A. R. soldiers of today.

The dramatic quality of this correspondence at a time when Massachusetts and Virginia were as far apart as Thibet and Brazil are now, cannot even be hinted at. It is worth a hundred plays and a hundred novels. Reading the correspondence converted me to testy, petulant, puffy old John Adams. And that is, in itself, a small miracle. The word "Adams" always did make me nervous.

For our final scene, let us picture a cabinet meeting at the height of Washington's first administration; the General presides and he sits in the chair not as though it were a throne, but as though he were on a magnificent white horse, that of a great general. Various members of the cabinet are scattered about in appropriate steel-engraving attitudes. But at one end of the table is Alexander Hamilton; and at the other, Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton is Secretary of the Treasury; Jefferson, Secretary of State. Whatever one man says, brings the other to his feet. The General, who could hold the British at bay, can scarcely keep these two men from an argument.

Now, my friends, you can think about this picture all you want to. If you are a Hamiltonian, you can say that Hamilton dominates the scene and furnishes the ideas. If you are a Jeffersonian, you can say that Jefferson dominates the scene and furnishes the ideas. I am not so much for ideas



A. Hamilton

as some people I know; and I cannot avoid the impression that George Washington is in the chair. In a hundred years, men will attribute Jefferson's ideas to Washington, if they are Jeffersonians; and they will attribute Hamilton's ideas to Washington, if they are Hamiltonians. But the Capital of the nation will be Washington, D. C., not Jefferson, D. C., nor Hamilton, D. C. It will take Thomas Jefferson a thousand years to get Hamilton out of that cabinet; it will take Hamilton a thousand years to get Jefferson out of that cabinet. Solve this puzzle your own way.

I was very much interested when a young English poet, Robert Nichols, three successive years on this soil, whom I met at intervals, tried to talk politics. I was amused to discover that every time I had answered him, "Well, your position on that question depends on whether you are Hamiltonian or Jeffersonian." Each time his indignation knew no bounds. The idea of a free country being a slave to a conflict raised by two men, dead so long! Why should we not invoke newer heroes? Why should we not indulge in abstract philosophy? I suppose the answer is that Washington put these men into his cabinet and could never get them out. He had caught two Tartars.

This cabinet meeting with Hamilton and Jefferson present, represents the statesmanship and the demigod quality of Washington, more than his last Federalist years. Your truly fanatical Hamiltonian much prefers to assume that Washington was always a dull and patient man on horseback; but think it through, my friends. Look at this Hamilton, a burning genius, with no Randolph for a mother, no Peter Jefferson for a father; with a pride like Milton's Satan,

that had to be self-consuming; with an instinctive military splendor that would have made him a Napoleon in Europe; with the same sense of adventure, and a much higher code of personal honor. This Hamilton who had to ride high till he died because the ground tortured his feet!

Washington made him into a private secretary during the Revolution, when he openly wanted a great command and was obviously fitted for one. Washington forced the account book upon him over and over when he demanded a sword in his hand. His military genius was far beyond his unquestioned financial genius. One of the first sights we have of him is as a young commander with the only well-equipped and well-drilled troops for miles around; a boy, trotting along beside a cannon, caressing it as though it were his mistress. He was a medieval adventurer of the highest type; Richard Coeur de Lion would have been glad of him. At the end of his heart-breaking career, he threw the election to Jefferson rather than let Burr be President, because he considered Aaron Burr a rotter. He gave the United States to his lifetime foe, because he knew him to be a Randolph and a gentleman. Now Washington, with this high-spirited creature under his arm all through the Revolution, did not let him rise to be a young Napoleon. As a result, the young Hamilton finally quit in a huff, and reappeared at the siege of Yorktown in a spirit of consistency only.

This Hamilton became Washington's councilor during the last of the old General's rule; thought his thoughts for him more and more; and received from the old gentleman everything except a military opportunity, the one desire of his

life. *Washington may not have been the paragon of wisdom described by some; but certainly his system gave no young Napoleons a chance.* When it looked like a war with France the year before Washington's death, when his eye had dimmed and his natural force abated, it was then and only then, that he allowed Hamilton to slip into the place of actual supreme command, with Washington for nominal commander of the forces. There is more in this

battle between the psychology of Washington and Hamilton than meets the eye. We can be at peace with people all our lives, and yet at war with them. We can be their masters, yet their slaves.

If Alexander Hamilton had been kept busy Indian fighting on the frontier instead of having a place in Washington's cabinet; if he had had a great military instead of a great financial opportunity for his imperious genius, perhaps he would not have looked at Jefferson with so much wrath in

this mystical cabinet meeting, or found his ideas so infuriating. Perhaps the Federalist Party, a useful instrument, would not have blown up so soon. But Washington kept these two men by him as long as he could and "regretted" losing either. By the same method, Abraham Lincoln filled his cabinet with his deadliest rivals for the presidency, every one of whom wrote home to his wife that he was the only man who could save the Union. Be it said for Jefferson and Hamilton that they were not guilty of this type of confidential communication with their dearest ones; and on the whole, very little guilty of disrespect to General George Washington of Virginia.

There is no doubt that in my mind and in my tradition, I am committed to the Democratic Party, which is right now called the party of Thomas Jefferson, if you don't care what you say. Any man who is avowedly and openly a Democrat, by the same token is under the suspicion of prejudice if he talks about Jefferson's greatest enemy in a free and forensic way. To work out the antithesis would take a Henry James, not an orator. So let me insist that I have brought the gallant figure of Hamilton into the discussion only because one cannot mention Jefferson without discussing Hamilton. I would gladly leave his praise to those who can surrender to the task with more abandon. This is, after all, a discussion of Thomas Jefferson's thousand years. I say, the debate will go on in this mystical symbolical George Washington cabinet meeting for a thousand years. The General will always be in the chair. The two other gallant figures will be at one another with all the fury of high souls. Possibly the conclusion of good Americans should be that

Washington must have been the Father of his Country indeed, to have kept this argument under one roof. These two are not as Montague and Capulet, cutting throats in the street; nor yet as Guelph and Ghibelline.

For my part, I say that at the end of a thousand years, Jefferson's ideas will prevail, in the Washington cabinet meeting. But Hamiltonians are surely entitled to vote the other way.

Meanwhile, I hear a boy's violin by the fireside at the old Raleigh Tavern, playing a backwoods tune.

Ere I forget thee, O Virginia, may my right hand forget her cunning.

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